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LOVEL THE WIDOWER

THE WOLVES AND THE LAMB

AND

NOTES OF A JOURNEY FROM CORNHILL TO GRAND CAIRO

BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1887

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LOVEL THE WIDOWER.

CHAPTER I.

The Bachelor of Beak Street.

WHO shall be the hero of this tale? Not I who write it. I am but the Chorus of the Play. I make remarks on the conduct of the characters: I narrate their simple story. There is love and marriage in it: there is grief and disappointment: the scene is in the parlour, and the region beneath the parlour. No: it may be the parlour and kitchen, in this instance, are on the same level. There is no high life, unless, to be sure, you call a baronet's widow a lady in high life; and some ladies may be, while some certainly are not. I don't think there's a villain in the whole performance. There is an abominable selfish old woman, certainly; an old highway robber; an old sponger on other people's kindness; an old haunter of Bath and Cheltenham boarding-houses (about which how can I know anything, never having been in a boarding-house at Bath or Cheltenham in my life?); an old swindler of tradesmen, tyrant of servants, bully of the poor—who, to be sure, might do duty for a villain, but she considers herself as virtuous a woman as ever was born. The heroine is not faultless (ah! that will be a great relief to some folk, for many writers' good women are, you know, so *very* insipid). The principal personage you may very likely think to be no better than a muff. But is many a respectable man of our acquaintance much better? and do muffs know that they are what they are, or, knowing it, are they unhappy? Do girls decline to marry one if he is rich? do we refuse to dine with one? I listened to one at church last Sunday, with all the women crying and sobbing; and, oh, dear me! how finely he preached! Don't we give him great credit for wisdom and eloquence in the House of Commons? Don't we give him important commands

in the army? Can you, or can you not, point out one who has been made a peer? Doesn't your wife call one in the moment any of the children are ill? Don't we read his dear poems, or even novels? Yes; perhaps even this one is read and written by—Well! *Quid rides?* Do you mean that I am painting a portrait which hangs before me every morning in the looking-

glass when I am shaving? *Après!* Do you suppose that I suppose that I have not infirmities like my neighbours? Am I weak? It is notorious to all my friends there is a certain dish I can't resist: no, not if I have already eaten twice too much at dinner. So, dear sir, or Madam, have *you* your weakness—*your* irresistible dish of temptation? (or if you don't know it, your friends do). No, dear friend, the chances are that you and I

are not people of the highest intellect, of the largest fortune, of the most ancient family, of the most consummate virtue, of the most faultless beauty in face and figure. We are no heroes nor angels; neither are we fiends from abodes unmentionable, black assassins, treacherous Iagos, familiar with stabbing and poison—murder our amusement, daggers our playthings, arsenic our daily bread, lies our conversation, and forgery our common handwriting. No, we are not monsters of crime, or angels walking the earth—at least I know *one* of us who isn't, as can be shown any day at home if the knife won't cut or the mutton comes up raw. But we are not altogether brutal and unkind, and a few folks like us. Our poetry is not as good as Alfred Tennyson's, but we can turn a couplet for Miss Fanny's album: our jokes are not always first-rate, but Mary and her mother smile very kindly when papa tells his story or makes his pun. We have many weaknesses, but we are not ruffians of crime. No more was my friend Lovel. On the contrary, he was as harmless and kindly a fellow as ever lived when I first knew him. At present, with his changed position, he is, perhaps, rather *fine* (and certainly I am not asked to his *best* dinner-parties as I used to be, where you hardly see a commoner—but stay! I am advancing matters). At the time when this story begins, I say, Lovel had his faults—which of us has not? He had buried his wife, having notoriously been henpecked by her. How many men and brethren are like him! He had a good fortune—I wish I had as much—though I dare say many people are ten times as rich. He was a good-looking fellow enough: though that depends, ladies, upon whether you like a fair man or a dark one. He had a country house, but it was only at Putney. In fact, he was in business in the City, and being an hospitable man, and having three or four spare bedrooms, some of his friends were always welcome at Shrublands, especially after Mrs. Lovel's death, who liked me pretty well at the period of her early marriage with my friend, but got to dislike me at last and to show me the cold shoulder. That is a joint I never could like (though I have known fellows who persist in dining off it year after year, who cling hold of it, and refuse to be separated from it. I say, when Lovel's wife began to show me that she was tired of my company, I made myself scarce: used to pretend to be engaged when Fred faintly asked me to Shrublands; to accept his meek apologies, proposals to

dine *en garçon* at Greenwich, the club, and so forth; and never visit upon him my wrath at his wife's indifference—for, after all, he had been my friend at many a pinch: he never stinted at "Hart's" or "Lovegrove's," and always made a point of having the wine I liked, never mind what the price was. As for his wife, there was, assuredly, no love lost between us—I thought her a lean, scraggy, lackadaisical, egotistical, consequential, insipid creature; and as for his mother-in-law, who stayed at Fred's as long and as often as her daughter would endure her, has any one who ever knew that notorious old Lady Baker at Bath, at Cheltenham, at Brighton,—wherever trumps and frumps were found together; wherever scandal was cackled; wherever flyblown reputations were assembled, and dowagers with damaged titles trod over each other for the *pas*;—who, I say, ever had a good word for that old woman? What party was not bored where she appeared? What tradesman was not done with whom she dealt? I wish with all my heart I was about to narrate a story with a good mother-in-law for a character; but then you know, my dear madam, all good women in novels are insipid. This woman certainly was not. She was not only not insipid, but exceedingly bad-tasted. She had a foul loud tongue, a stupid head, a bad temper, an immense pride and arrogance, an extravagant son, and very little money. Can I say much more of a woman than this? Aha! my good Lady Baker! I was a *mauvais sujet*, was I?—I was leading Fred into smoking, drinking, and low bachelor habits, was I? I, his old friend, who have borrowed money from him any time these twenty years, was not fit company for you and your precious daughter? Indeed! *I* paid the money I borrowed from him like a man; but did *you* ever pay him, I should like to know? When Mrs. Lovel was in the first column of the *Times*, *then* Fred and I used to go off to Greenwich and Blackwall, as I said; then his kind old heart was allowed to feel for his friend; *then* we could have the other bottle of claret without the appearance of Bedford and the coffee, which in Mrs. L.'s time used to be sent in to us before we could ring for a second bottle, although she and Lady Baker had had three glasses each out of the first. Three full glasses each, I give you my word! No, madam, it was your turn to bully me once—now it is mine and I use it. No, you old catamaran, though you pretend you never read novels, some of your confounded good-

natured friends will let you know of *this* one. Here you are, do you hear? Here you shall be shown up. And so I intend to show up *other* women and *other* men who have offended me. Is one to be subject to slights and scorn, and not have revenge? Kindnesses are easily forgotten; but injuries!—what worthy man does not keep *those* in mind?

Before entering upon the present narrative, may I take leave to inform a candid public that, though it is all true, there is not a word of truth in it; that though Lovel is alive and prosperous, and you very likely have met him, yet I defy you to point him out; that his wife (for he is Lovel the Widower no more) is not the lady you imagine her to be, when you say (as you will persist in doing), "Oh, that character is intended for Mrs. Thingamy, or was notoriously drawn from Lady So-and-So." No. You are utterly mistaken. Why, even the advertising puffers have almost given up that stale stratagem of announcing "REVELATIONS FROM HIGH LIFE.—The *beau monde* will be startled at recognising the portraits of some of its brilliant leaders in Miss Wiggins's forthcoming *roman de société*." Or, "We suspect a certain ducal house will be puzzled to guess how the pitiless author of 'Mayfair Mysteries' has become acquainted with (and exposed with a fearless hand) *certain family secrets* which were thought only to be known to a few of the very highest members of the aristocracy." No, I say; these silly baits to catch an unsuspecting public shall not be our arts. If you choose to occupy yourself with trying to ascertain if a certain cap fits one amongst ever so many thousand heads, you *may* possibly pop it on the right one: but the cap-maker will perish before he tells you; unless, of course, he has some private pique to avenge, or malice to wreak, upon some individual who can't by any possibility hit again;—*then*, indeed, he will come boldly forward and seize upon his victim—(a bishop, say, or a woman without coarse quarrelsome male relatives, will be best)—and clap on him, or her, such a cap, with such ears, that all the world shall laugh at the poor wretch, shuddering and blushing beetroot red, and whimpering deserved tears of rage and vexation at being made the common butt of society. Besides, I dine at Lovel's still; his company and cuisine are amongst the best in London. If they suspected I was taking them off, he and his wife would leave off inviting me. Would any man of a generous disposition lose such a valued friend for a joke, or be

so foolish as to show him up in a story? All persons with a decent knowledge of the world will at once banish the thought, as not merely base, but absurd. I am invited to his house one day next week: *vous concevez* I can't mention the very day, for then he would find me out—and of course there would be no more cards for his old friend. He would not like appearing, as it must be owned he does in this memoir, as a man of not very strong mind. He believes himself to be a most determined, resolute person. He is quick in speech, wears a fierce beard, speaks with asperity to his servants (who liken him to a—to that before-named sable or ermine contrivance, in which ladies insert their hands in winter), and takes his wife to task so smartly, that I believe she believes he believes he is the master of the house. "Elizabeth, my love, he must mean A, or B, or D," I fancy I hear Lovel say; and she says, "Yes; oh! it is certainly D—his very image!" "D to a T," says Lovel (who is a neat wit). *She* may know that I mean to depict her husband in the above unpretending lines: but she will never let me know of her knowledge except by a little extra courtesy; except (may I make this pleasing exception?) by a few more invitations; except by a look of those unfathomable eyes (gracious goodness! to think she wore spectacles ever so long, and put a lid over them as it were!), into which, when you gaze sometimes, you may gaze so deep, and deep, and deep, that I defy you to plump half-way down into their mystery.

When I was a young man, I had lodgings in Beak Street, Regent Street (I no more have lived in Beak Street than in Belgrave Square: but I choose to say so, and no gentleman will be so rude as to contradict another)—I had lodgings, I say, in Beak Street, Regent Street. Mrs. Prior was the landlady's name. She had seen better days—landladies frequently have. Her husband—he could not be called the landlord, for Mrs. P. was manager of the place—had been, in happier times, captain or lieutenant in the militia; then of Diss, in Norfolk, of no profession; then of Norwich Castle, a prisoner for debt; then of Southampton Buildings, London, law-writer; then of the Bom-Retiro Caçadores, in the service of H.M. the Queen of Portugal, lieutenant and paymaster; then of Melina Place, Saint George's Fields, &c.—I forbear to give the particulars of an existence which a legal biographer has traced step by step, and which has more than once been the subject of judicial investigation by

certain commissioners in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Well, Prior, at this time, swimming out of a hundred shipwrecks, had clambered on to a lighter, as it were, and was clerk to a coal-merchant, by the river-side. "You conceive, sir," he would say, "my employment is only temporary—the fortune of war, the fortune of war!" He smattered words in not a few foreign languages. His person was profusely scented with tobacco. Bearded individuals,[1] padding the muddy hoof in the neighbouring Regent Street, would call sometimes of an evening, and ask for "the Captain." He was known at many neighbouring billiard-tables, and, I imagine, not respected. You will not see enough of Captain Prior to be very weary of him and his coarse swagger, to be disgusted by his repeated requests for small money-loans, or to deplore his loss, which you will please to suppose has happened before the curtain of our present drama draws up. I think two people in the world were sorry for him: his wife, who still loved the memory of the handsome young man who had wooed and won her; his daughter Elizabeth, whom for the last few months of his life, and up to his fatal illness, he every evening conducted to what he called her "Academy." You are right. Elizabeth is the principal character in this story. When I knew her, a thin freckled girl of fifteen, with a lean frock, and hair of a reddish hue, she used to borrow my books, and play on the First Floor's piano, when he was from home—Slumley his name was. He was editor of the *Swell*, a newspaper then published; author of a great number of popular songs, a friend of several music-selling houses; and it was by Mr. Slumley's interest that Elizabeth was received as a pupil at what the family called "the Academy."

Captain Prior then used to conduct his girl to the Academy, but she often had to conduct him home again. Having to wait about the premises for two, or three, or five hours sometimes, whilst Elizabeth was doing her lessons, he would naturally desire to shelter himself from the cold at some neighbouring house of entertainment. Every Friday, a prize of a golden medal, nay, I believe sometimes of twenty-five silver medals, was awarded to Miss Bellenden and other young ladies for their good conduct and assiduity at this Academy. Miss Bellenden gave her gold medal to her mother, only keeping five shillings for herself, with which the poor child bought gloves, shoes, and her humble articles of millinery.

Once or twice the Captain succeeded in intercepting that piece of gold, and I dare say treated some of his whiskered friends, the clinking trampers of the Quadrant pavement. He was a free-handed fellow when he had anybody's money in his pocket. It was owing to differences regarding the settlement of accounts that he quarrelled with the coal-merchant, his very last employer. Bessy, after yielding once or twice to his importunity, and trying to believe his solemn promises of repayment, had strength of mind to refuse her father the pound which he would have taken. Her five shillings—her poor little slender pocket-money, the representative of her charities and kindnesses to the little brothers and sisters, of her little toilette ornaments, nay necessities; of those well-mended gloves, of those oft-darned stockings, of those poor boots, which had to walk many a weary mile after midnight; of those little knicknacks, in the shape of brooch or bracelet, with which the poor child adorned her homely robe or sleeve—her poor five shillings, out of which Mary sometimes found a pair of shoes, or Tommy a flannel-jacket, and little Bill a coach and horse—this wretched sum, this mite, which Bessy administered among so many poor—I very much fear her father sometimes confiscated. I charged the child with the fact, and she could not deny me. I vowed a tremendous vow, that if ever I heard of her giving Prior money again, I would quit the lodgings, and never give those children lollipop, nor pegtop, nor sixpence; nor the pungent marmalade, nor the biting gingerbread-nut, nor the theatre characters, nor the paint-box to illuminate the same; nor the discarded clothes, which became smaller clothes upon the persons of little Tommy and little Bill, for whom Mrs. Prior, and Bessy, and the little maid, cut, clipped, altered, ironed, darned, mangled, with the greatest ingenuity. I say, considering what had passed between me and the Priors—considering those money transactions, and those clothes, and my kindness to the children—it was rather hard that my jam-pots were poached, and my brandy-bottles leaked. And then to frighten her brother with the story of the inexorable creditor—oh, Mrs. Prior!—oh, fie, Mrs. P.!

So Bessy went to her school in a shabby shawl, a faded bonnet, and a poor little lean dress flounced with the mud and dust of all weathers, whereas there were some other young ladies, fellow-pupils of hers, who laid out their gold medals to much greater advantage. Miss Delamere, with her eighteen shillings a week

(calling them "*silver medals*" was only my wit, you see), had twenty new bonnets, silk and satin dresses for all seasons, feathers in abundance, swansdown muffs and tippets, lovely pocket-handkerchiefs and trinkets, and many and many a half-crown mould of jelly, bottle of sherry, blanket, or what not, for a poor fellow-pupil in distress; and as for Miss Montanville, who had exactly the same sal—well, who had a scholarship of exactly the same value, viz. about fifty pounds yearly—she kept an elegant little cottage in the Regent's Park, a brougham with a horse all over brass harness, and a groom with a prodigious gold lace hat-band, who was treated with frightful contumely at the neighbouring cabstand; an aunt or a mother, I don't know which (I hope it was only an aunt), always comfortably dressed, and who looked after Montanville; and she herself had bracelets, brooches, and velvet pelisses of the very richest description. But then Miss Montanville was a good economist. *She* was never known to help a poor friend in distress, or give a fainting brother and sister a crust or a glass of wine. She allowed ten shillings a week to her father, whose name was Boskinson, said to be a clerk to a chapel in Paddington; but she would never see him,—no, not when he was in hospital, where he was so ill; and though she certainly lent Miss Wilder thirteen pounds, she had Wilder arrested upon her promissory note for twenty-four, and sold up every stick of Wilder's furniture, so that the whole Academy cried shame! Well, an accident occurred to Miss Montanville, for which those may be sorry who choose. On the evening of the 26th of December, eighteen hundred and something, when the conductors of the Academy were giving their grand Annual Christmas Pant—I should say examination of the Academy pupils before their numerous friends—Montanville, who happened to be present, not in her brougham this time, but in an aërial chariot of splendour drawn by doves, fell off a rainbow, and through the roof of the Revolving Shrine of the Amaranthine Queen, thereby very nearly damaging Bellenden, who was occupying the shrine attired in a light-blue spangled dress, waving a wand, and uttering some idiotic verses composed for her by the Professor of Literature attached to the Academy. As for Montanville, let her go shrieking down that trap-door, break her leg, be taken home, and never more be character of ours. She never could speak. Her voice was as hoarse as a fish-woman's. Can that immense stout old box-keeper at the ——

Theatre, who limps up to ladies on the first tier, and offers that horrible footstool, which everybody stumbles over, and makes a clumsy curtsey, and looks so knowing and hard, as if she recognised an acquaintance in the splendid lady who enters the box—can that old female be the once brilliant Emily Montanville? I am told there are *no* lady box-keepers in the English theatres. This, I submit, is a proof of my consummate care and artifice in rescuing from a prurient curiosity the individual personages from whom the characters of the present story are taken. Montanville is *not* a box-opener. She *may*, under another name, keep a trinket-shop in the Burlington Arcade, for what you know: but this secret no torture shall induce me to divulge. Life has its rises and its downfalls, and you have had yours, you hobbling old creature. Montanville, indeed! Go thy ways! Here is a shilling for thee. (Thank you, sir.) Take away that confounded footstool, and never let us see thee more!

Now the fairy Amarantha was like a certain dear young lady of whom we have read in early youth. Up to twelve o'clock, attired in sparkling raiment, she leads the dance with the prince (Gradini, known as Grady in his days of banishment at the T. R., Dublin). At supper, she takes her place by the prince's royal father (who is alive now, and still reigns occasionally, so that we will not mention his revered name). She makes-believe to drink from the gilded pasteboard, and to eat of the mighty pudding. She smiles as the good old irascible monarch knocks the prime minister and the cooks about: she blazes in splendour: she beams with a thousand jewels, in comparison with which the Koh-i-noor is a wretched lustreless little pebble: she disappears in a chariot, such as a Lord Mayor never rode in!—and at midnight, who is that young woman tripping homeward through the wet streets in a battered bonnet, a cotton shawl, and a lean frock fringed with the dreary winter flounces?

Our Cinderella is up early in the morning: she does no little portion of the house-work: she dresses her sisters and brothers; she prepares papa's breakfast. On days when she has not to go to morning lessons at her Academy, she helps with the dinner. Heaven help us! She has often brought mine when I have dined at home, and owns to having made that famous mutton-broth when I had a cold. Foreigners come to the house—professional gentlemen—to see Slumley on the first floor: exiled captains of Spain and Portugal, companions of the warrior her

father. It is surprising how she has learned their accents, and has picked up French, and Italian too. And she played the piano in Mr. Slumley's room sometimes, as I have said ; but refrained from that presently, and from visiting him altogether. I suspect he was not a man of principle. His Paper used to make direful attacks upon individual reputations ; and you would find theatre and opera people most curiously praised and assaulted in the *Swell*. I recollect meeting him, several years after, in the lobby of the Opera, in a very noisy frame of mind, when he heard a certain lady's carriage called, and cried out with exceeding strong language, which need not be accurately reported, "Look at that woman ! Confound her ! I made her, sir ! Got her an engagement when the family was starving, sir ! Did you see her, sir? She wouldn't even look at me !" Nor indeed was Mr. S. at that moment a very agreeable object to behold.

Then I remembered that there had been some quarrel with this man, when we lodged in Beak Street together. If difficulty there was, it was solved *ambulando*. He quitted the lodgings, leaving an excellent and costly piano as security for a heavy bill which he owed to Mrs. Prior, and the instrument was presently fetched away by the music-sellers, its owners. But regarding Mr. S——'s valuable biography, let us speak very gently. You see it is "an insult to literature" to say that there are disreputable and dishonest persons who write in newspapers.

Nothing, dear friend, escapes your penetration ! if a joke is made in your company, you are down upon it instanter, and your smile rewards the wag who amuses you : so you knew at once, whilst I was talking of Elizabeth and her Academy, that a theatre was meant, where the poor child danced for a guinea or five-and-twenty shillings per week. Nay, she must have had not a little skill and merit to advance to the quarter of a hundred ; for she was not pretty at this time, only a rough tawny-haired filly of a girl, with great eyes. Dolphin, the manager, did not think much of her, and she passed before him in his regiment of Sea-nymphs, or Bayadères, or Fairies, or Mazurka maidens (with their fluttering lances and little scarlet slyboots !) scarcely more noticed than private Jones standing under arms in his company when His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal gallops by. There were no dramatic triumphs for Miss Bellenden : no bouquets were flung at her feet : no cunning Mephisto-

pheles—the emissary of some philandering Faustus outside—corrupted her duenna, or brought her caskets of diamonds. Had there been any such admirer for Bellenden, Dolphin would not only not have been shocked, but he would very likely have raised her salary. As it was, though himself, I fear, a person of loose morals, he respected better things. "That Bellenden's a good hhonest gurl," he said to the present writer: "works hard: gives her money to her family; father a shy old cove. Very good family I hear they are!" and he passes on to some other of the innumerable subjects which engage a manager.

Now, why should a poor lodging-house keeper make such a mighty secret of having a daughter earning an honest guinea by dancing at a theatre? Why persist in calling the theatre an Academy? Why did Mrs. Prior speak of it as such, to me who knew what the truth was, and to whom Elizabeth herself made no mystery of her calling?

There are actions and events in its life over which decent Poverty often chooses to cast a veil that is not unbecoming to wear. We can all, if we are minded, peer through this poor flimsy screen: often there is no shame behind it:—only empty platters, poor scraps, and other threadbare evidence of want and cold. And who is called on to show his rags to the public, and cry out his hunger in the street? At this time (her character has developed itself not so amiably since), Mrs. Prior was outwardly respectable; and yet, as I have said, my groceries were consumed with remarkable rapidity; my wine and brandy-bottles were all leaky, until they were excluded from air under a patent lock;—my Morel's raspberry-jam, of which I was passionately fond, if exposed on the table for a few hours, was always eaten by the cat, or that wonderful little wretch of a maid-of-all-work, so active, yet so patient, so kind, so dirty, so obliging. Was it *the maid* who took those groceries? I have seen the "Gazza Ladra," and know that poor little maids are sometimes wrongfully accused; and besides, in my particular case, I own I don't care who the culprit was. At the year's end, a single man is not much poorer for this house-tax which he pays. One Sunday evening, being confined with a cold, and partaking of that mutton-broth which Elizabeth made so well, and which she brought me, I entreated her to bring from the cupboard, of which I gave her the key, a certain brandy-bottle. She saw my face when I looked at her: there was no mis-

taking its agony. There was scarce any brandy left: it had all leaked away: and it was Sunday, and no good brandy was to be bought that evening.

Elizabeth, I say, saw my grief. She put down the bottle, and she cried: she tried to prevent herself from doing so at first, but she fairly burst into tears.

"My dear,—dear child," says I, seizing her hand, "you don't suppose I fancy you"——

"No—no!" she says, drawing the large hand over her eyes. "No—no! but I saw it when you and Mr. Warrington last 'ad some. Oh! do have a patting lock!"

"A patent lock, my dear!" I remarked. "How odd that you, who have learned to pronounce Italian and French words so well, should make such strange slips in English! Your mother speaks well enough."

"She was born a lady. She was not sent to be a milliner's girl, as I was, and then among those noisy girls at that—oh! that *place!*" cries Bessy, in a sort of desperation, clenching her hand.

Here the bells of Saint Beak's began to ring quite cheerily for evening service. I heard "Elizabeth!" cried out from the lower regions by Mrs. Prior's cracked voice. And the maiden went her way to church, which she and her mother never missed of a Sunday; and I dare say I slept just as well without the brandy-and-water.

Slumley being gone, Mrs. Prior came to me rather wistfully one day, and wanted to know whether I would object to Madame Bentivoglio, the opera-singer, having the first floor? This was too much, indeed! How was my work to go on with that woman practising all day and roaring underneath me? But, after sending away so good a customer, I could not refuse to lend the Priors a little more money; and Prior insisted upon treating me to a new stamp, and making out a new and handsome bill for an amount nearly twice as great as the last: which he had no doubt under Heaven, and which he pledged his honour as an officer and a gentleman, that he would meet. Let me see: that was how many years ago?—Thirteen, fourteen, twenty? Never mind. My fair Elizabeth, I think if you saw your poor old father's signature now, you would pay it. I came upon it lately in an old box I haven't opened these fifteen years, along with some letters, written—never mind by whom—

and an old glove that I used to set an absurd value by; and that emerald green tabinet waistcoat which kind old Mrs. Macmanus gave me, and which I wore at the L—d L—t—nt's ball, Ph–n–x Park, Dublin, once, when I danced with *her* there! Lord!—Lord! It would no more meet round my waist now than round Daniel Lambert's. How we outgrow things!

But as I never presented this united bill of £43 odd (the first portion of £23, &c., was advanced by me in order to pay an execution out of the house)—as I never expected to have it paid any more than I did to be Lord Mayor of London,—I say it was a little hard that Mrs. Prior should write off to her brother (she writes a capital letter), blessing Providence that had given him a noble income, promising him the benefit of her prayers, in order that he should long live to enjoy his large salary, and informing him that an obdurate creditor, who shall be nameless (meaning me), who had Captain Prior *in his power* (as if, being in possession of that dingy scrawl, I should have known what to do with it), who held Mr. Prior's acceptance for £43, 14s. 4d. due on the 3rd July (my bill), would infallibly bring their family to RUIN, unless a part of the money was paid up. When I went up to my old College, and called on Sargent, at Boniface Lodge, he treated me as civilly as if I had been an undergraduate; scarcely spoke to me in hall, where, of course, I dined at the Fellows' table; and only asked me to one of Mrs. Sargent's confounded tea-parties during the whole time of my stay. Now it was by this man's entreaty that I went to lodge at Prior's; he talked to me after dinner one day, he hummed, he ha'd, he blushed, he prated in his pompous way, about an unfortunate sister in London—fatal early marriage—husband, Captain Prior, Knight of the Swan with Two Necks of Portugal, most distinguished officer, but imprudent speculator—advantageous lodgings in the centre of London, quiet, though near the Clubs—if I was ill (I am a confirmed invalid), Mrs. Prior, his sister, would nurse me like a mother. So, in a word, I went to Prior's: I took the rooms: I was attracted by some children: Amelia Jane (that little dirty maid before mentioned) dragging a go-cart, containing a little dirty pair; another marching by them, carrying a fourth well-nigh as big as himself. These little folks, having threaded the mighty flood of Regent Street, debouched into the quiet creek of Beak Street, just as I happened to follow them. And the door at which the small caravan halted,—the

very door I was in search of,—was opened by Elizabeth, then only just emerging from childhood, with tawny hair falling into her solemn eyes.

The aspect of these little people, which would have deterred many, happened to attract me. I am a lonely man. I may have been ill-treated by some one once, but that is neither here nor there. If I had had children of my own, I think I should have been good to them. I thought Prior a dreadful vulgar wretch, and his wife a scheming, greedy little woman. But the children amused me: and I took the rooms, liking to hear overhead in the morning the patter of their little feet. The person I mean has several;—husband, judge in the West Indies. *Allons!* now you know how I came to live at Mrs. Prior's.

Though I am now a steady, a *confirmed* old bachelor (I shall call myself Mr. Batchelor, if you please, in this story; and there is some one far—far away who knows why I will NEVER take another title), I was a gay young fellow enough once. I was not above the pleasures of youth: in fact, I learned quadrilles on purpose to dance with her that long vacation when I went to read with my young friend, Lord Viscount Poldoody, at Dub—psha! Be still, thou foolish heart! Perhaps I misspent my time as an undergraduate. Perhaps I read too many novels, occupied myself too much with "elegant literature" (that used to be our phrase), and spoke too often at the Union, where I had a considerable reputation. But those fine words got me no College prizes: I missed my fellowship: was rather in disgrace with my relations afterwards, but had a small independence of my own, which I eked out by taking a few pupils for little-goes and the common degree. At length, a relation dying, and leaving me a further small income, I left the University, and came to reside in London.

Now in my third year at College, there came to Saint Boniface a young gentleman, who was one of the few gentlemen-pensioners of our society. His popularity speedily was great. A kindly and simple youth, he would have been liked, I dare say, even though he had been no richer than the rest of us; but this is certain, that flattery, worldliness, mammon-worship, are vices as well known to young as to old boys; and a rich lad at school or college has his followers, tuft-hunters, led-captains, little courts, just as much as any elderly millionaire of Pall Mall, who gazes round his Club to see whom he shall take home to dinner, while

humble trencher-men wait anxiously, thinking—Ah! will he take me this time? or will he ask that abominable sneak and toady Henchman again? Well — well! this is an old story about parasites and flatterers. My dear good sir, I am not for a moment going to say that *you* ever were one; and I dare say it was very base and mean of us to like a man chiefly on account of his money. "I know"—Fred Lovel used to say—"I know fellows come to my rooms because I have a large allowance, and plenty of my poor old governor's wine, and give good dinners: I am not deceived; but, at least, it is pleasanter to come to me and have good dinners, and good wine, than to go to Jack Highson's dreary tea and turnout, or to Ned Roper's abominable Oxbridge port." And so I admit at once that Lovel's parties *were* more agreeable than most men's in the College. Perhaps the goodness of the fare, by pleasing the guests, made them more pleasant. A dinner in hall and a pewter plate is all very well, and I can say grace before it with all my heart; but a dinner with fish from London, game, and two or three nice little *entrées*, is better—and there was no better cook in the University than ours at Saint Boniface, and ah me! there were appetites then, and digestions which rendered the good dinner doubly good.

Between me and young Lovel a friendship sprang up, which, I trust, even the publication of this story will not diminish. There is a period, immediately after the taking of his bachelor's degree, when many a University man finds himself embarrassed. The tradesmen rather rudely press for a settlement of their accounts. Those prints we ordered *calidi juventâ*; those shirt-studs and pins which the jewellers would persist in thrusting into our artless bosoms; those fine coats we would insist on having for our books, as well as ourselves; all these have to be paid for by the graduate. And my father, who was then alive, refusing to meet these demands, under the—I own—just plea, that my allowance had been ample, and that my half-sisters ought not to be mulcted of their slender portions in consequence of my extravagance, I should have been subject to very serious inconvenience—nay, possibly, to personal incarceration—had not Lovel, at the risk of rustication, rushed up to London to his mother (who then had *especial reasons* for being very gracious with her son), obtained a supply of money from her, and brought it to me at Mr. Shackell's horrible hotel, where I was lodged. He had tears in his kind eyes; he grasped my hand a

hundred and hundred times as he flung the notes into my lap; and the recording tutor (Sargent was only tutor then), who was going to bring him up before the master for breach of discipline, dashed away a drop from his own lid, when, with a moving eloquence, I told what had happened, and blotted out the transaction with some particular old 1811 port, of which we freely partook in his private rooms that evening. By laborious instalments, I had the happiness to pay Lovel back. I took pupils, as I said; I engaged in literary pursuits: I became connected with a literary periodical, and, I am ashamed to say, I imposed myself upon the public as a good classical scholar. I was not thought the less learned, when, my relative dying, I found myself in possession of a small independency; and my "Translations from the Greek," my "Poems by Beta," and my articles in the paper of which I was part-proprietor for several years, have had their little success in their day.

Indeed at Oxbridge, if I did not obtain University honours, at least I showed literary tastes. I got the prize essay one year at Boniface, and plead guilty to having written essays, poems, and a tragedy. My College friends had a joke at my expense (a very small joke serves to amuse those port-wine-bibbing fogies, and keeps them laughing for ever so long a time)—they are welcome, I say, to make merry at my charges—in respect of a certain bargain which I made on coming to London, and in which, had I been Moses Primrose purchasing green spectacles, I could scarcely have been more taken in. *My* Jenkinson was an old College acquaintance, whom I was idiot enough to imagine a respectable man: the fellow had a very smooth tongue, and sleek sanctified exterior. He was rather a popular preacher, and used to cry a good deal in the pulpit. He, and a queer wine-merchant and bill-discounter, Sherrick by name, had somehow got possession of that neat little literary paper, the *Museum*, which, perhaps, you remember; and this eligible literary property my friend Honeyman, with his wheedling tongue, induced me to purchase. I bear no malice: the fellow is in India now, where I trust he pays his butcher and baker. He was in dreadful straits for money when he sold me the *Museum*. He began crying when I told him some short time afterwards that he was a swindler, and from behind his pocket-handkerchief sobbed a prayer that I should one day think better of him; whereas my remarks to the same effect produced an

exactly contrary impression upon his accomplice, Sherrick, who burst out laughing in my face, and said, "The more fool you!" Mr. Sherrick was right. He was a fool, without mistake, who had any money-dealing with him; and poor Honeyman was right, too; I don't think so badly of him as I did. A fellow so hardly pinched for money could not resist the temptation of extracting it from such a greenhorn. I dare say I gave myself airs as editor of that confounded *Museum*, and proposed to educate the public taste, to diffuse morality and sound literature throughout the nation, and to pocket a liberal salary in return for my services. I dare say I printed my own sonnets, my own tragedy, my own verses (to a Being who shall be nameless, but whose conduct has caused a faithful heart to bleed not a little). I dare say I wrote satirical articles, in which I piqued myself upon the fineness of my wit, and criticisms, got up for the nonce out of encyclopædias and biographical dictionaries; so that I would be actually astounded at my own knowledge. I dare say I made a gaby of myself to the world: pray, my good friend, hast thou never done likewise? If thou hast never been a fool, be sure thou wilt never be a wise man.

I think it was my brilliant *confrère* on the first floor (he had pecuniary transactions with Sherrick, and visited two or three of Her Majesty's metropolitan prisons at that gentleman's suit) who first showed me how grievously I had been cheated in the newspaper matter. Slumley wrote for a paper printed at our office. The same boy often brought proofs to both of us—a little bit of a puny bright-eyed chap, who looked scarce twelve years old, when he was sixteen; who in wit was a man, when in stature he was a child,—like many other children of the poor.

This little Dick Bedford used to sit many hours asleep on my landing-place or Slumley's, whilst we were preparing our invaluable compositions within our respective apartments. S—— was a good-natured reprobate, and gave the child of his meat and his drink. I used to like to help the little man from my breakfast, and see him enjoy the meal. As he sat, with his bag on his knees, his head sunk in sleep, his little highlows scarce reaching the floor, Dick made a touching little picture. The whole house was fond of him. The tipsy Captain nodded him a welcome as he swaggered downstairs, stock, and coat, and waistcoat in hand, to his worship's toilette in the back kitchen. The children and Dick were good friends: and Elizabeth patronised

him, and talked with him now and again, in her grave way. You know Clancy the composer?—know him better, perhaps, under his name of Friedrich Donner? Donner used to write music to Slumley's words, or *vice versâ;* and would come now and again to Beak Street, where he and his poet would try their joint work at the piano. At the sound of that music, little Dick's eyes used to kindle. "Oh, it's prime!" said the young enthusiast. And I will say, that good-natured miscreant of a Slumley not only gave the child pence, but tickets for the play, concerts, and so forth. Dick had a neat little suit of clothes at home; his mother made him a very nice little waistcoat out of my undergraduate's gown, and he and she, a decent woman, when in their best raiment, looked respectable enough for any theatre-pit in England.

Amongst other places of public amusement which he attended, Mr. Dick frequented the Academy where Miss Bellenden danced, and whence poor Elizabeth Prior issued forth after midnight in her shabby frock. And once, the Captain, Elizabeth's father and protector, being unable to walk very accurately, and noisy and incoherent in his speech, so that the attention of Messieurs of the police was directed towards him, Dick came up, placed Elizabeth and her father in a cab, paid the fare with his own money, and brought the whole party home in triumph, himself sitting on the box of the vehicle. I chanced to be coming home myself (from one of Mrs. Wateringham's elegant tea *soirées*, in Dorset Square), and reached my door just at the arrival of Dick and his caravan. "Here, cabby!" says Dick, handing out the fare, and looking with his brightest eyes. It is pleasanter to look at that beaming little face, than at the Captain yonder, reeling into his house, supported by his daughter. Dick cried, Elizabeth told me, when, a week afterwards, she wanted to pay him back his shilling; and she said he was a strange child, that he was.

I revert to my friend Lovel. I was coaching Lovel for his degree (which, between ourselves, I think he never would have attained), when he suddenly announced to me, from Weymouth, where he was passing the vacation, his intention to quit the University, and to travel abroad. "Events have happened, dear friend," he wrote, "which will make my mother's home miserable to me (I little knew when I went to town about your business, what caused her *wonderful complaisance* to me). She

would have broken my heart, Charles" (my Christian name is Charles), "but its wounds have found a *consoler!*"

Now, in this little chapter, there are some little mysteries propounded, upon which, were I not above any such artifice, I might easily leave the reader to ponder for a month.

1. Why did Mrs. Prior, at the lodgings, persist in calling the theatre at which her daughter danced the Academy?

2. What were the special reasons why Mrs. Lovel should be very gracious with her son, and give him £150 as soon as he asked for the money?

3. Why was Fred Lovel's heart nearly broken? And—

4. Who was his consoler?

I answer these at once, and without the slightest attempt at delay or circumlocution. 1. Mrs. Prior, who had repeatedly received money from her brother, John Erasmus Sargent, D.D., Master of Saint Boniface College, knew perfectly well that if the Master (whom she already pestered out of his life) heard that she had sent a niece of his on the stage, he would never give her another shilling.

2. The reason why Emma, widow of the late Adolphus Loeffel, of Whitechapel Road, sugar-baker, was so particularly gracious to her son, Adolphus Frederick Lovel, Esquire, of Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge, and principal partner in the house of Loeffel aforesaid, an infant, was that she, Emma, was about to contract a second marriage with the Reverend Samuel Bonnington.

3. Fred Lovel's heart was so very much broken by this intelligence, that he gave himself airs of Hamlet, dressed in black, wore his long fair hair over his eyes, and exhibited a hundred signs of grief and desperation; until—

4. Louisa (widow of the late Sir Popham Baker, of Bakerstown, county Kilkenny, Baronet) induced Mr. Lovel to take a trip on the Rhine with her and Cecilia, fourth and only unmarried daughter of the aforesaid Sir Popham Baker, deceased.

My opinion of Cecilia I have candidly given in a previous page. I adhere to that opinion. I shall not repeat it. The subject is disagreeable to me, as the woman herself was in life. What Fred found in her to admire I cannot tell: lucky for us all that tastes, men, women, vary. You will never see her alive in this history. That is her picture, painted by the late Mr. Gandish. She stands fingering that harp with which she has

often driven me half mad with her "Tara's Halls" and her "Poor Marianne." She used to bully Fred so, and be so rude to his guests, that, in order to pacify her, he would meanly say, "Do, my love, let us have a little music!" and thrumpty—thrumpty, off would go her gloves, and "Tara's Halls" would begin. "The harp that *once*," indeed! the accursed catgut scarce knew any other music, and "once" was a hundred times at least in *my* hearing. Then came the period when I was treated to the cold joint which I have mentioned! and, not liking it, I gave up going to Shrublands.

So, too, did my Lady Baker, but not of *her own free will*, mind you. *She* did not quit the premises because her reception was too cold, but because the house was made a great deal too hot for her. I remember Fred coming to me in high spirits, and describing to me, with no little humour, a great battle between Cecilia and Lady Baker, and her Ladyship's defeat and flight. She fled, however, only as far as Putney village, where she formed again, as it were, and fortified herself in a lodging. Next day she made a desperate but feeble attack, presenting herself at Shrublands lodge-gate, and threatening that she and sorrow would sit down before it; and that all the world should know how a daughter treated her mother. But the gate was locked, and Barnet, the gardener, appeared behind it saying, "Since you *are* come, my Lady, perhaps you will pay my missis the four-and-twenty shillings you borrowed of her." And he grinned at her through the bars, until she fled before him, cowering. Lovel paid the little forgotten account; the best four-and-twenty shillings he had ever laid out, he said.

Eight years passed away; during the last four of which I scarce saw my old friend, except at clubs and taverns, where we met privily, and renewed, not old warmth and hilarity, but old kindness. One winter he took his family abroad; Cecilia's health was delicate, Lovel told me, and the doctor had advised that she should spend a winter in the South. He did not stay with them: he had pressing affairs at home; he had embarked in many businesses besides the paternal sugar-bakery; was concerned in companies, a director of a joint-stock bank, a man in whose fire were many irons. A faithful governess was with the children; a faithful man and maid were in attendance on the invalid; and Lovel, adoring his wife, as he certainly did, yet supported her absence with great equanimity.

In the spring I was not a little scared to read amongst the deaths in the newspaper:—"At Naples, of scarlet fever, on the 25th ult., Cecilia, wife of Frederick Lovel, Esquire, and daughter of the late Sir Popham Baker, Baronet." I knew what my friend's grief would be. He had hurried abroad at the news of her illness; he did not reach Naples in time to receive the last words of his poor Cecilia.

Some months after the catastrophe, I had a note from Shrublands. Lovel wrote quite in the old affectionate tone. He begged his dear old friend to go to him, and console him in his solitude. Would I come to dinner that evening?

Of course I went off to him straightway. I found him in deep sables in the drawing-room with his children, and I confess I was not astonished to see my Lady Baker once more in that room.

"You seem surprised to see me here, Mr Batchelor?" says her Ladyship, with that grace and good-breeding which she generally exhibited; for if she accepted benefits, she took care to insult those from whom she received them.

"Indeed, no," said I, looking at Lovel, who piteously hung down his head. He had his little Cissy at his knee: he was sitting under the portrait of the defunct musician, whose harp, now muffled in leather, stood dimly in the corner of the room.

"I am here not at my own wish, but from a feeling of duty towards that—departed—angel!" says Lady Baker, pointing to the picture.

"I am sure when mamma was here, you were always quarrelling," says little Popham, with a scowl.

"This is the way those innocent children have been taught to regard me," cries grandmamma.

"Silence, Pop," says papa, "and don't be a rude boy."

"Isn't Pop a rude boy?" echoes Cissy.

"Silence, Pop," continues papa, "or you must go up to Miss Prior."

CHAPTER II.

In which Miss Prior is kept at the Door.

Of course we all know who she was, the Miss Prior of Shrublands, whom papa and grandmamma called to the unruly children. Years had passed since I had shaken the Beak Street dust off my feet. The brass plate of "Prior" was removed from the once familiar door, and screwed, for what I can tell, on to the late reprobate owner's coffin. A little eruption of mushroom-formed brass knobs I saw on the door-post when I passed by it last week, and Café des Ambassadeurs was thereon inscribed, with three fly-blown blue teacups, a couple of coffee-pots of the well-known Britannia metal, and two freckled copies of the *Indépendance Belge* hanging over the window-blind. Were those their Excellencies the Ambassadors at the door, smoking cheroots? Pool and Billiards were written on their countenances, their hats, their elbows. They may have been ambassadors down on their luck, as the phrase is. They were in disgrace, no doubt, at the court of her imperial majesty Queen Fortune. Men as shabby have retrieved their disgraces ere now, washed their cloudy faces, strapped their dingy waistcoats with cordons, and stepped into fine carriages from quarters not a whit more reputable than the "Café des Ambassadeurs." If I lived in the Leicester Square neighbourhood, and kept a café, I would always treat foreigners with respect. They may be billiard-markers now, or doing a little shady police business; but why should they not afterwards be generals and great officers of state? Suppose that gentleman is at present a barber, with his tongs and stick of fixature for the moustaches, how do you know he has not his epaulettes and his *bâton de maréchal* in the same pouch? I see engraven on the second-floor bell, on my rooms, "Plugwell." Who can Plugwell be, whose feet now warm at the fire where I sat many a long evening? And this gentleman with the fur collar, the straggling beard, the frank and engaging leer, the somewhat husky voice, who is calling out on the doorstep, "Step in, and 'ave it done. Your correct likeness, only one shilling"—is he an ambassador too? Ah, no: he is only the *chargé-d affaires* of a photographer who lives upstairs: no doubt where the little ones used to be. Bless

me! Photography was an infant, and in the nursery, too, when *we* lived in Beak Street.

Shall I own that, for old times' sake, I went upstairs, and "'ad it done"—that correct likeness, price one shilling? Would Some One (I have said, I think, that the party in question is well married in a distant island) like to have the thing, I wonder, and be reminded of a man whom she knew in life's

prime, with brown curly locks, as she looked on the effigy of this elderly gentleman, with a forehead as bare as a billiard-ball?

As I went up and down that darkling stair, the ghosts of the Prior children peeped out from the banisters; the little faces smiled in the twilight: it may be wounds (of the heart) throbbed and bled again,—oh, how freshly and keenly! How infernally I have suffered behind that door in that room—I mean that

one where Plugwell now lives. Confound Plugwell! I wonder what that woman thinks of me as she sees me shaking my fist at the door? Do you think me mad, madam? I don't care if you do. Do you think when I spoke anon of the ghosts of Prior's children, I mean that any of them are dead? None are, that I know of. A great hulking Bluecoat-boy, with fluffy whiskers, spoke to me not long since, in an awful bass voice, and announced his name as "Gus Prior." And "How's Elizabeth?" he added, nodding his bullet head. Elizabeth, indeed, you great vulgar boy! Elizabeth,—and, by the way, how long we have been keeping her waiting!

You see, as I beheld her, a heap of memories struck upon me, and I could not help chattering; when of course—and you are perfectly right, only you might just as well have left the observation alone: for I knew quite well what you were going to say—when I had much better have held my tongue. Elizabeth means a history to me. She came to me at a critical period of my life. Bleeding and wounded from the conduct of that other individual (by her present name of Mrs. O'D—her present *O'D*-ous name—I say, I will never—never call her) —desperately wounded and miserable on my return from a neighbouring capital, I went back to my lodgings in Beak Street, and there there grew up a strange intimacy between me and my landlady's young daughter. I told her my story—indeed, I believe I told anybody who would listen. She seemed to compassionate me. She would come wistfully into my rooms, bringing me my gruel and things (I could scarcely bear to eat for a while after—after that affair to which I may have alluded before)—she used to come to me, and she used to pity me, and I used to tell her all, and to tell her over and over again. Days and days have I passed tearing my heart out in that second-floor room which answers to the name of Plugwell now. Afternoon after afternoon have I spent there, and poured out my story of love and wrong to Elizabeth, shown her that waistcoat I told you of—that glove (her hand wasn't so very small either)—her letters, those two or three vacuous, meaningless letters, with "My dear sir—Mamma hopes you will come to tea;" or, "If dear Mr. Batchelor *should* be riding in the Phœnix Park near the *Long Milestone*, about 2, my sister and I will be in the car, and," &c.; or, "Oh, you kind man! the tickets" (she called it *tickuts*—by heaven! she did) "were too welcome, and the

bouquays too lovely" (this word, I saw, had been operated on with a penknife. I found no faults, not even in her spelling—then); or—never mind what more. But more of this *puling*, of this *humbug*, of this *bad spelling*, of this infernal jilting, swindling, heartless hypocrisy (all her mother's doing, I own; for until he *got his place*, my rival was not so well received as I was)—more of this RUBBISH, I say, I showed Elizabeth, and she pitied me!

She used to come to me day after day, and I used to talk to her. She used not to say much. Perhaps she did not listen; but I did not care for that. On—and on—and on I would go with my prate about my passion, my wrongs, and despair; and untiring as my complaints were, still more constant was my little hearer's compassion. Mamma's shrill voice would come to put an end to our conversation, and she would rise up with an "Oh, bother!" and go away: but the next day the good girl was sure to come to me again, when we would have another repetition of our tragedy.

I dare say you are beginning to suppose (what, after all, is a very common case, and certainly *no conjuror* is wanted to make the guess) that out of all this crying and sentimentality, which a soft-hearted old fool of a man poured out to a young girl—out of all this whimpering and pity, something which is said to be akin to pity might arise. But in this, my good madam, you are utterly wrong. Some people have the small-pox twice; *I do not*. In my case, if a heart is broke, it's broke: if a flower is withered, it's withered. If I choose to put my grief in a ridiculous light, why not? why do you suppose I am going to make a tragedy of such an old used-up, battered, stale, vulgar, trivial every-day subject as a jilt who plays with a man's passion, and laughs at him, and leaves him? Tragedy indeed! Oh, yes! poison—black-edged note-paper—Waterloo Bridge—one more unfortunate, and so forth! No: if she goes, let her go!—*si celeres quatit pennas*, I puff the what-d'ye-call-it away! But I'll have no *tragedy*, mind you.

Well, it must be confessed that a man desperately in love (as I fear I must own I then was, and a good deal cut up by Glorvina's conduct) is a most selfish being: whilst women are so soft and unselfish that they can forget or disguise their own sorrows for a while, whilst they minister to a friend in affliction. I did not see, though I talked with her daily, on my return from that

accursed Dublin, that my little Elizabeth was pale and *distraite*, and sad, and silent. She would sit quite dumb whilst I chattered, her hands between her knees, or draw one of them over her eyes. She would say, "Oh yes! Poor fellow—poor fellow!" now and again, as giving a melancholy confirmation of my dismal stories; but mostly she remained quiet, her head drooping towards the ground, a hand to her chin, her feet to the fender.

I was one day harping on the usual string. I was telling Elizabeth how, after presents had been accepted, after letters had passed between us (if her scrawl could be called letters, if my impassioned song could be so construed), after everything but the actual word had passed our lips—I was telling Elizabeth how, on one accursed day, Glorvina's mother greeted me on my arrival in M-rr-n Square by saying, "Dear, dear Mr. Batchelor, we look on you quite as one of the family! Congratulate me—congratulate my child! Dear Tom has got his appointment as Recorder of Tobago; and it is to be a match between him and his cousin Glory."

"His cousin *What?*" I shriek, with a maniac laugh.

"My poor Glorvina! Sure the children have been fond of each other ever since they could speak. I knew your kind heart would be the first to rejoice in their happiness."

And so, say I—ending the story—I, who thought myself loved, was left without a pang of pity: I, who could mention a hundred reasons why I thought Glorvina well disposed to me, was told she regarded me as an *uncle!* Were her letters such as nieces write? Who ever heard of an uncle walking round Merrion Square for hours of a rainy night, and looking up to a bedroom window, because his *niece*, forsooth, was behind it? I had set my whole heart on the cast, and this was the return I got for it. For months she cajoles me—her eyes follow me, her cursed smiles welcome and fascinate me, and at a moment, at the beck of another—she laughs at me and leaves me!

At this, my little pale Elizabeth, still hanging down, cries, "Oh, the villain! the villain!" and sobs so that you might have thought her little heart would break.

"Nay," said I, "my dear, Mr. O'Dowd is no villain. His uncle, Sir Hector, was as gallant an old officer as any in the service. His aunt was a Molloy, of Molloystown, and they are of excellent family, though, I believe, of embarrassed circumstances; and young Tom"——

"*Tom?*" cries Elizabeth, with a pale, bewildered look. "*His name wasn't Tom*, dear Mr. Batchelor; *his name was Woo-woo-illiam!*" and the tears begin again.

Ah, my child! my child! my poor young creature! and you, too, have felt the infernal stroke. You, too, have passed the tossing nights of pain—have heard the dreary hours toll—have looked at the cheerless sunrise with your blank sleepless eyes—have woke out of dreams, mayhap, in which the beloved one was smiling on you, whispering love-words—oh! how sweet and fondly remembered! What!—your heart has been robbed, too, and your treasury is rifled and empty!—poor girl! And I looked in that sad face, and saw no grief there! You could do your little sweet endeavour to soothe my wounded heart, and I never saw yours was bleeding! Did you suffer more than I did, my poor little maid? I hope not. Are you so young, and is all the flower of life blighted for you? the cup without savour, the sun blotted or almost invisible over your head? The truth came on me all at once: I felt ashamed that my own selfish grief should have made me blind to hers.

"What!" said I, "my poor child? Was it . . .?" and I pointed with my finger *downwards*.

She nodded her poor head.

I knew it was the lodger who had taken the first floor shortly after Slumley's departure. He was an officer in the Bombay Army. He had had the lodgings for three months. He had sailed for India shortly before I returned home from Dublin.

Elizabeth is waiting all this time—shall she come in? No, not yet. I have still a little more to say about the Priors.

You understand that she was no longer Miss Prior of Beak Street, and that mansion, even at the time of which I write, had been long handed over to other tenants. The Captain dead, his widow with many tears pressed me to remain with her, and I did, never having been able to resist that kind of appeal. Her statements regarding her affairs were not strictly correct.—Are not women sometimes incorrect about money matters?—A landlord (not unjustly indignant) quickly handed over the mansion in Beak Street to other tenants. The Queen's taxes swooped down on poor Mrs. Prior's scanty furniture—on hers?—on mine likewise: on my neatly-bound College books, emblazoned with the effigy of Bonifacius, our patron, and of Bishop Budgeon, our founder; on my elegant Raphael

Morghen prints, purchased in undergraduate days—(ye powers! what *did* make us boys go tick for fifteen-guinea proofs of Raphael, Dying Stags, Duke of Wellington Banquets, and the like?)—my harmonium, at which SOME ONE has warbled songs of my composition—(I mean the words, artfully describing my passion, my hopes, or my despair;) on my rich set of Bohemian glass, bought on the Zeil, Frankfort O. M.; on my picture of my father, the late Captain Batchelor (Hoppner), R.N.; in white ducks, and a telescope, pointing, of course, to a tempest, in the midst of which was a naval engagement; on my poor mother's miniature, by old Adam Buck, in pencil, and pink, with no waist to speak of at all; my tea and cream pots (bullion), with a hundred such fond knick-knacks as decorate the chamber of a lonely man. I found all these household treasures in possession of the myrmidons of the law, and had to pay the Priors' taxes with this hand, before I could be redintegrated in my own property. Mrs. Prior could only pay me back with a widow's tears and blessings (Prior having quitted a world where he had long ceased to be of use or ornament). The tears and blessings, I say, she offered me freely, and they were all very well. But why go on tampering with the tea-box, madam? Why put your finger —your finger?—your whole paw—in the jam-pot? And it is a horrible fact that the wine and spirit bottles were just as leaky after Prior's decease as they had been during his disreputable lifetime. One afternoon, having a sudden occasion to return to my lodgings, I found my wretched landlady in the very act of marauding sherry. She gave an hysterical laugh, and then burst into tears. She declared that since her poor Prior's death she hardly knew what she said or did. She may have been incoherent; she was; but she certainly spoke truth on *this* occasion.

I am speaking lightly—flippantly, if you please—about this old Mrs. Prior, with her hard eager smile, her wizened face, her frowning look, her cruel voice; and yet, goodness knows, I could, if I liked, be as serious as a sermoniser. Why, this woman had once red cheeks, and was well-looking enough, and told few lies, and stole no sherry, and felt the tender passions of the heart, and I dare say kissed the weak old beneficed clergyman her father very fondly and remorsefully that night when she took leave of him to skip round to the back-garden gate

and run away with Mr. Prior. Maternal instinct she had, for she nursed her young as best she could from her lean breast, and went about hungrily, robbing and pilfering for them. On Sundays she furbished up that threadbare black silk gown and bonnet, ironed the collar, and clung desperately to church. She had a feeble pencil-drawing of the vicarage in Dorsetshire, and *silhouettes* of her father and mother, which were hung up in the lodgings wherever she went. She migrated much: wherever she went she fastened on the gown of the clergyman of the parish; spoke of her dear father the vicar, of her wealthy and gifted brother the Master of Boniface, with a reticence which implied that Doctor Sargent might do more for his poor sister and her family, if he would. She plumed herself (oh! those poor moulting old plumes!) upon belonging to the clergy; had read a good deal of good sound old-fashioned theology in early life, and wrote a noble hand, in which she had been used to copy her father's sermons. She used to put cases of conscience, to present her humble duty to the Reverend Mr. Green, and ask explanation of such and such a passage of his admirable sermon, and bring the subject round so as to be reminded of certain quotations of Hooker, Beveridge, Jeremy Taylor. I think she had an old commonplace book with a score of these extracts, and she worked them in very amusingly and dexterously into her conversation. Green would be interested: perhaps pretty young Mrs. Green would call, secretly rather shocked at the coldness of old Doctor Brown, the rector, about Mrs. Prior. Between Green and Mrs. Prior money transactions would ensue: Mrs. Green's visits would cease: Mrs. Prior was an expensive woman to know. I remember Pye of Maudlin, just before he "went over," was perpetually in Mrs. Prior's back parlour with little books, pictures, medals, &c. &c.—you know. They called poor Jack a Jesuit at Oxbridge; but one year at Rome I met him (with a half-crown shaved out of his head, and a hat as big as Don Basilio's); and he said, "My dear Batchelor, do you know that person at your lodgings? I think she was an artful creature! She borrowed fourteen pounds of me, and I forget how much of—seven, I think—of Barfoot, of Corpus, just—just before we were received. And I believe she absolutely got another loan from Pummel, to be able to get out of the hands of us Jesuits. Are you going to hear the Cardinal? Do—do go and hear him—everybody

does: it's the most fashionable thing in Rome." And from this I opine that there are slyboots in other communions besides that of Rome.

Now Mamma Prior had not been unaware of the love-passages between her daughter and the fugitive Bombay captain. Like Elizabeth, she called Captain Walkingham "villain" readily enough; but, if I know woman's nature in the least (and I don't), the old schemer had thrown her daughter only too frequently in the officer's way, had done no small portion of the flirting herself, had allowed poor Bessy to receive presents from Captain Walkingham, and had been the manager and directress of much of the mischief which ensued. You see, in this humble class of life, unprincipled mothers *will* coax and wheedle and cajole gentlemen whom they suppose to be eligible, in order to procure an establishment for their darling children! What the Prioress did was done from the best motives of course. "Never—never did the monster see Bessy without me, or one or two of her brothers and sisters, and Jack and dear Ellen are as sharp children as any in England!" protested the indignant Mrs. Prior to me; "and if one of my boys had been grown up, Walkingham never would have dared to act as he did—the unprincipled wretch! My poor husband would have punished the villain as he deserved; but what could he do in his shattered state of health? Oh! you men,—you men, Mr. Batchelor! how *unprincipled* you are!"

"Why, my good Mrs. Prior," said I, "you let Elizabeth come to my room often enough."

"To have the conversation of her uncle's friend, of an educated man, of a man so much older than herself! Of course, dear sir! Would not a mother wish every advantage for her child? and whom could I trust, if not you, who have ever been such a friend to me and mine?" asks Mrs. Prior, wiping her dry eyes with the corner of her handkerchief, as she stands by my fire, my monthly bills in hand,—written in her neat old-fashioned writing, and calculated with that prodigal liberality which she always exercised in compiling the little accounts between us. "Why, bless me!" says my cousin, little Mrs. Skinner, coming to see me once when I was unwell, and examining one of the just-mentioned documents,—"bless me! Charles, you consume more tea than all my family, though

we are seven in the parlour, and as much sugar and butter,—well, it's no wonder you are bilious!"

"But then, my dear, I like my tea so *very* strong," said I; "and you take yours so uncommonly mild. I have remarked it at your parties."

"It's a shame that a man should be robbed so," cried Mrs. S.

"How kind it is of you to cry thieves, Flora!" I reply.

"It's my duty, Charles!" exclaims my cousin. "And I should like to know who that great, tall, gawky, red-haired girl in the passage is!"

Ah me! the name of the only woman who ever had possession of this heart was not Elizabeth; though I own I did think at one time that my little schemer of a landlady would not have objected if I had proposed to make Miss Prior Mrs. Batchelor. And it is not only the poor and needy who have this mania, but the rich too. In the very highest circles, as I am informed by the best authorities, this match-making goes on. Ah woman—woman!—ah wedded wife!—ah fond mother of fair daughters! how strange thy passion is to add to thy titles that of mother-in-law! I am told, when you have got the title, it is often but a bitterness and a disappointment. Very likely the son-in-law is rude to you, the coarse ungrateful brute! and very possibly the daughter rebels, the thankless serpent! And yet you will go on scheming: and having met only with disappointment from Louisa and her husband, you will try and get one for Jemima, and Maria, and down even to little Toddles coming out of the nursery in her red shoes! When you see her with little Tommy, your neighbour's child, fighting over the same Noah's ark, or clambering on the same rocking-horse, I make no doubt, in your fond silly head, you are thinking, "Will those little people meet some twenty years hence?" And you give Tommy a very large piece of cake, and have a fine present for him on the Christmas tree—you know you do, though he is but a rude noisy child, and has already beaten Toddles, and taken her doll away from her, and made her cry. I remember, when I myself was suffering from the conduct of a young woman in—in a capital which is distinguished by a viceregal Court—and from *her* heartlessness, as well as that of her relative, who I once thought would be *my* mother-in-law—shrieking out to a friend who happened to be spouting some lines from Tennyson's "Ulysses:"—"By George! Warrington, I have no doubt that

when the young sirens set their green caps at the old Greek captain and his crew, waving and beckoning him with their white arms and glancing smiles, and wheedling him with their sweetest pipes—I make no doubt, sir, that *the mother sirens* were behind the rocks (with their dyed fronts and cheeks painted, so as to resist water), and calling out—'Now, Halcyone, my child, that air from the Pirata! Now, Glaukopis, dear, look well at that old gentleman at the helm! Bathykolpos, love, there's a young sailor on the maintop, who will tumble right down into your lap if you beckon him!' And so on—and so on." And I laughed a wild shriek of despair. For I, too, have been on the dangerous island, and come away thence, mad, furious, wanting a strait-waistcoat.

And so, when a white-armed siren, named Glorvina, was bedevilling *me* with her all too tempting ogling and singing, I did not see at the time, but *now* I know, that her artful mother was egging that artful child on.

How, when the Captain died, bailiffs and executions took possession of his premises, I have told in a previous page, nor do I care to enlarge much upon the odious theme. I think the bailiffs were on the premises before Prior's exit: but he did not know of their presence. If I had to buy them out, 'twas no great matter: only I say it *was* hard of Mrs. Prior to represent me in the character of Shylock to the Master of Boniface. Well—well! I suppose there are other gentlemen besides Mr. Charles Batchelor who have been misrepresented in this life. Sargent and I made up matters afterwards, and Miss Bessy was the cause of our coming together again. "Upon my word, my dear Batchelor," says he one Christmas, when I went up to the old College, "I did not know how much my—ahem!—my family was obliged to you! My—ahem!—niece, Miss Prior, has informed me of various acts of—ahem!—generosity which you showed to my poor sister, and her still more wretched husband. You got my second—ahem!—nephew—pardon me if I forget his Christian name—into the what-d'you-call'em—Bluecoat School; you have been, on various occasions, of considerable pecuniary service to my sister's family. A man need not take high university honours to have a good—ahem!—heart; and, upon my word, Batchelor, I and my—ahem!—wife are sincerely obliged to you!"

"I tell you what, Master," said I, "there *is* a point upon

which you ought really to be obliged to me, and in which I have been the means of putting money into your pocket too."

"I confess I fail to comprehend you," says the Master, with his grandest air.

"I have got you and Mrs. Sargent a very good governess for your children, at the very smallest remuneration," say I.

"Do you know the charges that unhappy sister of mine and her family have put me to already?" says the Master, turning as red as his hood.

"They have formed the frequent subject of your conversation," I replied. "You have had Bessy as a governess"——

"A nursery governess—she has learned Latin and a great deal more, since she has been in my house," cries the Master.

"A nursery governess at the wages of a housemaid," I continued, as bold as Corinthian brass.

"Does my niece, does my—ahem!—children's governess, complain of her treatment in my College?" cries the Master.

"My dear Master," I asked, "you don't suppose I would have listened to her complaints, or, at any rate, have repeated them, until now!"

"And why now, Batchelor, I should like to know?" says the Master, pacing up and down his study in a fume, under the portraits of holy Bonifacius, Bishop Budgeon, and all the defunct bigwigs of the College. "And why now, Batchelor, I should like to know?" says he.

"Because—though after staying with you for three years, and having improved herself greatly, as every woman must in your society, my dear Master, Miss Prior is worth at least fifty guineas a year more than you give her—I would not have had her speak until she had found a better place."

"You mean to say she proposes to go away?"

"A wealthy friend of mine, who was a member of our College by the way, wants a nursery governess, and I have recommended Miss Prior to him, at seventy guineas a year."

"And pray who's the member of my College who will give my niece seventy guineas?" asked the Master fiercely.

"You remember Lovel, the gentleman-pensioner?"

"The sugar-baking man—the man who took you out of ja——"

"One good turn deserves another," say I hastily. "I have done as much for some of your family, Sargent!"

The red Master, who had been rustling up and down his study in his gown and bands, stopped in his walk as if I had struck him. He looked at me. He turned redder than ever. He drew his hand over his eyes. "Batchelor," says he, "I ask your pardon. It was I who forgot myself—may Heaven forgive me!—forgot how good you have been to my family, to my—ahem!—*humble* family, and—and how devoutly thankful I ought to be for the protection which they have found in you." His voice quite fell as he spoke: and of course any little wrath which I might have felt was disarmed before his contrition. We parted the best friends. He not only shook hands with me at the study-door, but he actually followed me to the hall-door, and shook hands at his lodge-porch, *sub Jove*, in the quadrangle. Huckles, the tutor (Highlow Huckles we use to call him in our time), and Botts (Trumperian professor), who happened to be passing through the court at the time, stood aghast as they witnessed the phenomenon.

"I say, Batchelor," asks Huckles, "have you been made a marquis by any chance?"

"Why a marquis, Huckles?" I ask.

"Sargent never comes to his lodge-door with any man under a marquis," says Huckles, in a low whisper.

"Or a pretty woman, says that Botts (he *will* have his joke). "Batchelor, my elderly Tiresias, are you turned into a lovely young lady *par hasard?*"

"Get along, you absurd Trumperian professor!" say I. But the circumstance was the talk not only in Compotation Room that evening over our wine, but of the whole College. And further, events happened which made each man look at his neighbour with wonder. For that whole term Sargent did not ask our nobleman Lord Sackville (Lord Wigmore's son) to the lodge. (Lord W.'s father, you know, Duff, was baker to the College.) For that whole term he was rude but twice to Perks, the junior tutor, and then only in a very mild way; and what is more, he gave his niece a present of a gown, of his blessing, of a kiss, and a high character, when she went away;—and promised to put one of her young brothers to school—which promise, I need not say, he faithfully kept: for he has good principles, Sargent has. He is rude: he is ill-bred: he is *bumptious* beyond almost any man I ever knew: he is spoiled not a little by prosperity;—but he is magnanimous: he can own that he has been

in the wrong; and oh me! what a quantity of Greek he knows!

Although my late friend the Captain never seemed to do aught but spend the family money, his disreputable presence somehow acted for good in the household. "My dear husband kept our family together," Mrs. Prior said, shaking her lean head under her meagre widow's cap. "Heaven knows how I shall provide for these lambs now he is gone!" Indeed, it was not until after the death of that tipsy shepherd that the wolves of the law came down upon the lambs—myself included, who have passed the age of lambhood and mint sauce a long time. They came down upon our fold in Beak Street, I say, and ravished it. What was I to do? Could I leave that widow and children in their distress? I was not ignorant of misfortune, and knew how to succour the miserable. Nay, I think, the little excitement attendant upon the seizure of my goods, &c., the insolent vulgarity of the low persons in possession—with one of whom I was very near coming to a personal encounter—and other incidents which occurred in the bereft household, served to rouse me, and dissipate some of the languor and misery under which I was suffering in consequence of Miss Mulligan's conduct to me. I know I took the late Captain to his final abode. My good friends the printers of the *Museum* took one of his boys into their counting-house. A blue coat and a pair of yellow stockings were procured for Augustus; and seeing the Master's children walking about in Boniface gardens with a glum-looking old wretch of a nurse, I bethought me of proposing to him to take his niece Miss Prior—and, Heaven be good to me! never said one word to her uncle about Miss Bellenden and the Academy. I dare say I drew a number of long-bows about her. I managed about the bad grammar pretty well by lamenting that Elizabeth's poor mother had been forced to allow the girl to keep company with ill-educated people: and added, that she could not fail to mend her English in the house of one of the most distinguished scholars in Europe, and one of the best-bred women. I did say so, upon my word, looking that half-bred, stuck-up Mrs. Sargent gravely in the face; and I humbly trust, if that bouncer has been registered against me, the Recording Angel will be pleased to consider that the motive was good, though the statement was unjustifiable. But I don't think it was the compliment: I think it was the temptation of getting a governess for next to nothing

that operated upon Madam Cargent. And so Bessy went to her aunt, partook of the bread of dependence, and drank of the cup of humiliation, and ate the pie of humility, and brought up her odious little cousins to the best of her small power, and bowed the head of hypocrisy before the don her uncle, and the pompous little upstart her aunt. *She* the best-bred woman in England, indeed! She, the little vain skinflint!

Bessy's mother was not a little loth to part with the fifty pounds a year which the child brought home from the Academy; but her departure thence was inevitable. Some quarrel had taken place there, about which the girl did not care to talk. Some rudeness had been offered to Miss Bellenden, to which Miss Prior was determined not to submit: or was it that she wanted to go away from the scenes of her own misery, and to try and forget that Indian captain? Come, fellow-sufferer! Come, child of misfortune, come hither! Here is an old bachelor who will weep with thee tear for tear!

I protest here is Miss Prior coming into the room at last. A pale face, a tawny head of hair combed back, under a black cap: a pair of blue spectacles, as I live! a tight mourning dress, buttoned up to her white throat; a head hung meekly down: such is Miss Prior. She takes my hand when I offer it. She drops me a demure little curtsey, and answers my many questions with humble monosyllabic replies. She appeals constantly to Lady Baker for instruction, or for confirmation of her statements. What! have six years of slavery so changed the frank, daring young girl whom I remember in Beak Street? She is taller and stouter than she was. She is awkward and high-shouldered, but surely she has a very fine figure.

"Will Miss Cissy and Master Popham have their teas here or in the schoolroom?" asks Bedford, the butler, of his master, Miss Prior looks appealingly to Lady Baker.

"In the sch——" Lady Baker is beginning.

"Here—here!" bawl out the children. "Much better fun down here: and you'll send us out some fruit and things from dinner, papa!" cries Cissy.

"It's time to dress for dinner," says her Ladyship.

"Has the first bell rung?" asks Lovel.

"Yes, the first bell has rung, and grandmamma must go, for it always takes her a precious long time to dress for dinner!" cries Pop. And indeed, on looking at Lady Baker, the connoisseur

might perceive that her Ladyship was a highly composite person, whose charms required very much care and arrangement. There are some cracked old houses where the painters and plumbers and puttyers are always at work.

"Have the goodness to ring the bell!" she says, in a majestic manner, to Miss Prior, though I think Lady Baker herself was nearest.

I sprang towards the bell myself, and my hand meets Elizabeth's there, who was obeying her Ladyship's summons, and who retreats, making me the demurest curtsey. At the summons, enter Bedford the butler (he was an old friend of mine too) and young Buttons, the page under that butler.

Lady Baker points to a heap of articles on a table, and says to Bedford: "If you please, Bedford, tell my man to give those things to Pincott, my maid, to be taken to my room."

"Shall not I take them up, dear Lady Baker?" says Miss Prior.

But Bedford, looking at his subordinate, says: "Thomas! tell Bulkeley, her Ladyship's man, to take her Ladyship's things, and give them to her Ladyship's maid." There was a tone of sarcasm, even of parody, in Monsieur Bedford's voice; but his manner was profoundly grave and respectful. Drawing up her person, and making a motion, I don't know whether of politeness or defiance, exit Lady Baker, followed by page, bearing bandboxes, shawls, paper parcels, parasols—I know not what. Dear Popham stands on his head as grandmamma leaves the room. "Don't be vulgar!" cries little Cissy (the dear child is always acting as a little Mentor to her brother). "I shall, if I like," says Pop; and makes faces at her.

"You know your room, Batch?" asks the master of the house.

"Mr. Batchelor's old room—always has the blue room," says Bedford, looking very kindly at me.

"Give us," cried Lovel, "a bottle of that Sau——"

"——terne Mr. Batchelor used to like. Château Yquem. All right!" says Mr. Bedford. "How will you have the turbot done you brought down?—Dutch sauce?—Make lobster into salad? Mr. Bonnington likes lobster-salad," says Bedford. Pop is winding up the butler's back at this time. It is evident Mr. Bedford is a privileged person in the family. As he had entered it on my nomination several years ago, and had been

ever since the faithful valet, butler, and major-domo of Lovel, Bedford and I were always good friends when we met.

"By the way, Bedford, why wasn't the barouche sent for me to the bridge?" cries Lovel. "I had to walk all the way home, with a bat and stumps for Pop, with a basket of fish, and that bandbox with my Lady's"——

"He—he!" grins Bedford.

"'He—he!' Confound you, why do you stand grinning there? Why didn't I have the carriage, I say?" bawls the master of the house.

"*You* know, sir," says Bedford. "*She* had the carriage." And he indicated the door through which Lady Baker had just retreated.

"Then why didn't I have the phaeton?" asks Bedford's master.

"Your ma and Mr. Bonnington had the phaeton."

"And why shouldn't they, pray? Mr. Bonnington is lame: I'm at my business all day. I should like to know why they *shouldn't* have the phaeton?" says Lovel, appealing to me. As we had been sitting talking together previous to Miss Prior's appearance, Lady Baker had said to Lovel, "Your mother and Mr. Bonnington are coming to dinner *of course*, Frederick?" and Lovel had said, "Of course they are," with a peevish bluster, whereof I now began to understand the meaning. The fact was, these two women were fighting for the possession of this child; but who was the Solomon to say which should have him? Not I. *Nenni.* I put my oar in no man's boat. Give me an easy life, my dear friends, and row me gently over.

"You had better go and dress," says Bedford sternly, looking at his master; "the first bell has rung this quarter of an hour. Will you have some '34?"

Lovel started up; he looked at the clock. "You are all ready, Batch, I see. I hope you are going to stay some time, ain't you?" And he disappeared to array himself in his sables and starch. I was thus alone with Miss Prior and her young charges, who resumed straightway their infantine gambols and quarrels.

"My dear Bessy!" I cry, holding out both hands, "I am heartily glad to"——

"Ne m'appelez que de mon nom paternel devant tout ce monde, s'il vous plait, mon cher ami, mon bon protecteur!"

she says hastily, in very good French, folding her hands and making a curtsey.

"Oui, oui, oui! Parlez-vous Français? J'aime, tu aimes, il aime!" cries out dear Master Popham. "What are you talking about? Here's the phaeton!" and the young, innocent dashes through the open window on to the lawn, whither he is followed by his sister, and where we see the carriage containing Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington rolling over the smooth walk.

Bessy advances towards me, and gives me readily enough now the hand she had refused anon.

"I never thought you would have refused it, Bessy," said I.

"Refuse it to the best friend I ever had!" she says, pressing my hand. "Ah, dear Mr. Batchelor, what an ungrateful wretch I should be, if I did!"

"Let me see your eyes. Why do you wear spectacles? You never wore them in Beak Street," I say. You see I was very fond of the child. She had wound herself around me in a thousand fond ways. Owing to a certain Person's conduct my heart may be a ruin—a Persepolis, sir—a perfect Tadmor. But what then? May not a traveller rest under its shattered columns? May not an Arab maid repose there till the morning dawns and the caravan passes on? Yes, my heart is a Palmyra, and once a Queen inhabited me (O Zenobia! Zenobia! to think thou should'st have been led away captive by an O'D—!). Now, I am alone, alone in the solitary wilderness. Nevertheless, if a stranger comes to me I have a spring for his weary feet, I will give him the shelter of my shade. Rest thy cheek awhile, young maiden, on my marble—then go thy ways and leave me.

This I thought, or something to this effect, as, in reply to my remark, "Let me see your eyes," Bessy took off her spectacles, and I took them up and looked at her. Why didn't I say to her, "My dear brave Elizabeth! as I look in your face, I see you have had an awful deal of suffering. Your eyes are inscrutably sad. We who are initiated, know the members of our Community of Sorrow. We have both been wrecked in different ships, and been cast on this shore. Let us go hand-in-hand, and find a cave and a shelter somewhere together!" I say, why didn't I say this to her. She would have come, I feel sure she would. We would have been semi-attached as it were. We would have locked up that room in either heart where the

skeleton was, and said nothing about it, and pulled down the party wall and taken our mild tea in the garden. I live in Pump Court now. It would have been better than this dingy loneliness and a snuffy laundress who bullies me. But for Bessy? Well—well, perhaps better for her too.

I remember these thoughts rushing through my mind whilst I held the spectacles. What a number of other things too! I remember two canaries making a tremendous concert in their cage. I remember the voices of the two children quarrelling on the lawn, the sound of the carriage wheels grinding over the gravel; and then of a little old familiar cracked voice in my ear, with a "La, Mr. Batchelor; are *you* here?" And a sly face looks up at me from under an old bonnet.

"It is mamma," says Bessy.

"And I'm come to tea with Elizabeth and the dear children; and while you are at dinner, dear Mr. Batchelor, thankful—thankful for all mercies! And dear me! here is Mrs. Bonnington, I do declare! Dear madam, how well you look—not twenty, I declare! And dear Mr. Bonnington! Oh, sir! let me—let me, I *must* press your hand. What a sermon last Sunday! All Putney was in tears!"

And the little woman, flinging out her lean arms, seizes portly Mr. Bonnington's fat hand, as he and kind Mrs. Bonnington enter at the open casement. The little woman seems inclined to do the honours of the house. "And won't you go upstairs, and put on your cap? Dear me, what a lovely ribbon! How blue does become Mrs. Bonnington! I always say so to Elizabeth," she cries, peeping into a little packet which Mrs. Bonnington bears in her hand. After exchanging friendly words and greetings with me, that lady retires to put the lovely cap on, followed by her little jackal of an aide-de-camp. The portly clergyman surveys his pleased person in the spacious mirror. "Your things are in your old room—like to go in, and brush up a bit?" whispers Bedford to me. I am obliged to go, you see, though, for my part, I had thought, until Bedford spoke, that the ride on the top of the Putney omnibus had left me without any need of brushing; having aired my clothes, and given my young cheek a fresh and agreeable bloom.

My old room, as Bedford calls it, was that snug apartment communicating by double doors with the drawing-room, and whence you can walk on to the lawn out of the windows.

"Here's your books, here's your writing-paper," says Bedford, leading the way into the chamber. "Does sore eyes good to see *you* down here again, sir. You may smoke now. Clarence Baker smokes when he comes. Go and get some of that wine you like for dinner." And the good fellow's eyes beam kindness upon me as he nods his head, and departs to superintend the duties of his table. Of course you understand that this Bedford was my young printer's boy of former days. What a queer fellow! I had not only been kind to him, but he was grateful.

CHAPTER III.

In which I play the Spy.

THE room to which Bedford conducted me I hold to be the very pleasantest chamber in all the mansion of Shrublands. To lie on that comfortable cool bachelor's bed there, and see the birds hopping about on the lawn; to peep out of the French window at early morning, inhale the sweet air, mark the dewy bloom on the grass, listen to the little warblers performing their chorus, step forth in your dressing-gown and slippers, pick a strawberry from the bed, or an apricot in its season; blow one, two, three, just half-a dozen puffs of a cigarette; hear the venerable towers of Putney toll the hour of six (three hours from breakfast, by consequence), and pop back into bed again with a favourite novel, or review, to set you off (you see I am not malicious, or I could easily insert here the name of some twaddler against whom I have a grudgekin): to pop back into bed again, I say, with a book which sets you off into that dear invaluable second sleep, by which health, spirits, appetite are so prodigiously improved:—all these I hold to be most cheerful and harmless pleasures, and have partaken of them often at Shrublands with a grateful heart. That heart may have had its griefs, but is yet susceptible of enjoyment and consolation. That bosom may have been lacerated, but is not therefore and henceforward a stranger to comfort. After a certain affair in Dublin—nay, very soon after, three months after—I recollect remarking to myself: "Well, thank my stars, I still have a relish for '34 claret." Once at Shrublands I heard steps pacing overhead at night, and the feeble but continued wail of an infant. I wakened from my sleep,

was sulky, but turned and slept again. Biddlecombe the barrister, I knew, was the occupant of the upper chamber. He came down the next morning looking wretchedly yellow about the cheeks, and livid round the eyes. His teething infant had kept him on the march all night, and Mrs. Biddlecombe, I am told, scolds him frightfully besides. He munched a shred of toast, and was off by the omnibus to chambers. I chipped a second egg; I may have tried one or two other nice little things on the table (Strasbourg pâté I know I never can resist, and am convinced it is perfectly wholesome). I could see my own sweet face in the mirror opposite, and my gills were as rosy as any broiled salmon. "Well—well!" I thought, as the barrister disappeared on the roof of the coach, "he has *domus* and *placens uxor*—but is she *placens? Placente* to walk about all night with a roaring baby? Is it pleasing to go to bed after a long hard day's work, and have your wife nagnagging you because she has not been invited to the Lady Chancelloress's *soirée*, or what not? Suppose the Glorvina whom you loved so had been yours? Her eyebrows looked as if they could scowl, her eyes as if they could flash with anger. Remember what a slap she gave the little knife-boy for upsetting the butter-boat over her tabinet. Suppose *parvulus aulâ*, a little Batchelor your son, who had the toothache all night in your bedroom?" These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind as I helped myself to the comfortable meal before me. "I say, what a lot of muffins you're eating!" cried innocent Master Lovel. Now the married, the wealthy, the prosperous Biddlecombe only took his wretched scrap of dry toast. "Aha!" you say, "this man is consoling himself after his misfortune." O churl! and do you grudge me consolation? "Thank you, dear Miss Prior. Another cup, and plenty of cream, if you please." Of course, Lady Baker was not at table when I said, "Dear Miss Prior," at breakfast. Before her Ladyship I was as mum as a mouse. Elizabeth found occasion to whisper to me during the day in her demure way: "This is a very rare occasion. Lady B—— never allows me to breakfast alone with Mr. Lovel, but has taken her extra nap, I suppose, because you and Mr. and Mrs. Biddlecombe were here."

Now it may be that one of the double doors of the room which I inhabited was occasionally open, and that Mr. Batchelor's eyes and ears are uncommonly quick, and note a number of things which less observant persons would never regard or

discover; but out of this room, which I occupied for some few days, now and subsequently, I looked forth as from a little ambush upon the proceedings of the house, and got a queer little insight into the history and characters of the personages round about me. The two grandmothers of Lovel's children were domineering over that easy gentleman, as women—not grandmothers merely, but sisters, wives, aunts, daughters, when the chance is given them—will domineer. Ah! Glorvina, what a grey mare you might have become had you chosen Mr. Batchelor for your consort! (But this I only remark with a parenthetic sigh.) The two children had taken each the side of a grandmamma, and whilst Master Pop was declared by his maternal grandmother to be a Baker all over, and taught to despise sugar-baking and trade, little Cecilia was Mrs. Bonnington's favourite, repeated Watts's hymns with fervent precocity; declared that she would marry none but a clergyman; preached infantine sermons to her brother and maid about worldliness; and somewhat wearied me, if the truth must be told, by the intense self-respect with which she regarded her own virtues. The old ladies had that love for each other, which one may imagine that their relative positions would engender. Over the bleeding and helpless bodies of Lovel and his worthy and kind stepfather, Mr. Bonnington, they skirmished and fired shots at each other. Lady B—— would give hints about second marriages, and second families, and so forth, which of course made Mrs. Bonnington wince. Mrs. B—— had the better of Lady Baker, in consequence of the latter's notorious pecuniary irregularities. *She* had never had recourse to her son's purse, she could thank Heaven. She was not afraid of meeting any tradesman in Putney or London: she had never been ordered out of the house in the late Cecilia's lifetime; *she* could go to Boulogne and enjoy the *fresh air* there. This was the terrific whip she had over Baker. Lady B——, I regret to say, in consequence of the failure of remittances, had been locked up in prison, just at a time when she was in a state of violent quarrel with her late daughter, and good Mr. Bonnington had helped her out of durance. How did I know this? Bedford, Lovel's factotum, told me: and how the old ladies were fighting like two cats.

There was one point on which the two ladies agreed. A very wealthy widower, young still, good-looking, and good-tempered,

we know can sometimes find a dear woman to console his loneliness, and protect his motherless children. From the neighbouring Heath, from Wimbledon, Roehampton, Barnes, Mortlake, Richmond, Esher, Walton, Windsor, nay, Reading, Bath, Exeter, and Penzance itself, or from any other quarter of Britain, over which your fancy may please to travel, families would have come ready with dear young girls to take charge of that man's future happiness; but it is a fact that these two dragons kept all women off from their ward. An unmarried woman, with decent good looks, was scarce ever allowed to enter Shrublands gate. If such an one appeared, Lovel's two mothers sallied out, and crunched her hapless bones. Once or twice he dared to dine with his neighbours, but the ladies led him such a life that the poor creature gave up the practice, and faintly announced his preference for home. "My dear Batch," says he, "what do I care for the dinners of the people round about? Has any one of them got a better cook or better wine than mine? When I come home from business, it is an intolerable nuisance to have to dress and go out seven or eight miles to cold *entrées*, and loaded claret, and sweet port. I can't stand it, sir. I *won't* stand it" (and he stamps his foot in a resolute manner). "Give me an easy life, a wine-merchant I can trust, and my own friends, by my own fireside. Shall we have some more? We can manage another bottle among us three, Mr. Bonnington?"

"Well," says Mr. Bonnington, winking at the ruby goblet, "I am sure I have no objection, Frederick, to another bo——"

"Coffee is served, sir," cries Bedford, entering.

"Well—well, perhaps we have had enough," says worthy Bonnington.

"We *have* had enough; we all drink too much," says Lovel briskly. "Come in to coffee."

We go to the drawing-room. Fred and I, and the two ladies, sit down to a rubber, whilst Miss Prior plays a piece of Beethoven to a slight warbling accompaniment from Mr. Bonnington's handsome nose, who has fallen asleep over the newspaper. During our play, Bessy glides out of the room—a grey shadow. Bonnington wakens up when the tray is brought in. Lady Baker likes that good old custom: it was always the fashion at the Castle, and she takes a good glass of negus too; and so do we all; and the conversation is pretty merry, and Fred Lovel hopes I shall sleep better to-night, and is very facetious about

poor Biddlecombe, and the way in which that eminent Q.C. is henpecked by his wife.

From my bachelor's room, then, on the ground-floor; or from my solitary walks in the garden, whence I could oversee many things in the house; or from Bedford's communications to me, which were very friendly, curious, and unreserved; or from my own observation, which I promise you can see as far into the mill-stones of life as most folk's, I grew to find the mysteries of Shrublands no longer mysterious to me; and, like another *Diable Boiteux*, had the roofs of a pretty number of the Shrublands rooms taken off for me.

For instance, on that very first day of my stay, whilst the family were attiring themselves for dinner, I chanced to find two secret cupboards of the house unlocked, and the contents unveiled to me. Pinhorn, the children's maid, a giddy little flirting thing in a pink ribbon, brought some articles of the toilette into my worship's apartment, and as she retired did not shut the door behind her. I might have thought that pert little head had never been made to ache by any care; but ah! black care sits behind the horseman, as Horace remarks, and not only behind the horseman, but behind the footman; and not only on the footman, but on the buxom shoulders of the lady's-maid. So with Pinhorn. You surely have remarked respecting domestic servants that they address you in a tone utterly affected and unnatural—adopting, when they are amongst each other, voices and gestures entirely different from those which their employers see and hear. Now, this little Pinhorn, in her occasional intercourse with your humble servant, had a brisk, quick, fluttering toss of the head, and a frisky manner, no doubt capable of charming some persons. As for me, ancillary allurements have, I own, had but small temptations. If Venus brought me a bedroom candle and a jug of hot water, I should give her sixpence, and no more. Having, you see, given my all to one wom—Psha! never mind *that* old story.—Well, I dare say this little creature may have been a flirt, but I took no more notice of her than if she had been a coal-scuttle.

Now, suppose she *was* a flirt. Suppose, under a mask of levity, she hid a profound sorrow. Do you suppose she was the first woman who ever has done so? Do you suppose because she had fifteen pounds a year, her tea, sugar, and beer, and told fibs to her masters and mistresses, she had not a heart?

She went out of the room, absolutely coaxing and leering at me as she departed, with a great counterpane over her arm ; but in the next apartment I heard her voice quite changed, and another changed voice too—though not so much altered—interrogating her. My friend Dick Bedford's voice, in addressing those whom Fortune had pleased to make his superiors, was gruff and brief. He seemed to be anxious to deliver himself of his speech to you as quickly as possible ; and his tone always seemed to hint, "There—there is my message, and I have delivered it ; but you know perfectly well that I am as good as you." And so he was, and so I always admitted : so even the trembling, believing, flustering, suspicious Lady Baker herself admitted, when she came into communication with this man. I have thought of this little Dick as of Swift at Sheen hard by, with Sir William Temple ; or Spartacus when he was as yet the servant of the fortunate Roman gentleman who owned him. Now if Dick was intelligent, obedient, useful, only not rebellious, with his superiors, I should fancy that amongst his equals he was by no means pleasant company, and that most of them hated him for his arrogance, his honesty, and his scorn of them all.

But women do not always hate a man for scorning and despising them. Women do not revolt at the rudeness and arrogance of us their natural superiors. Women, if properly trained, come down to heel at the master's bidding, and lick the hand that has been often raised to hit them. I do not say that brave little Dick Bedford ever raised an actual hand to this poor serving-girl, but his tongue whipped her, his behaviour trampled on her, and she cried, and came to him whenever he lifted a finger. Psha ! don't tell *me*. If you want a quiet, contented, orderly home, and things comfortable about you, that is the way you must manage your women.

Well, Bedford happens to be in the next room. It is the morning-room at Shrublands. You enter the dining-room from it, and they are in the habit of laying out the dessert there, before taking it in for dinner. Bedford is laying out his dessert as Pinhorn enters from my chamber, and he begins upon her with a sarcastic sort of grunt, and a "Ho ! suppose you ve been making up to B., have you ?"

"Oh, Mr. Bedford, *you* know very well who it is I cares for !" she says, with a sigh.

"Bother!" Mr. B. remarks.

"Well, Richard, then!" (here she weeps).

"Leave go my 'and!—leave go my a-hand, I say!" (What *could* she have been doing to cause this exclamation?)

"Oh, Richard, it's not your '*and* I want—it's your ah-ah-art, Richard!"

"Mary Pinhorn," exclaims the other, "what's the use of going on with this game? You know we couldn't be a-happy together—you know your ideers ain't no good, Mary. It ain't your fault. *I* don't blame you for it, my dear. Some people are born clever, some are born tall: I ain't tall."

"Oh, you're tall enough for me, Richard!"

Here Richard again found occasion to cry out: "*Don't*, I say! Suppose Baker was to come in and find you squeezing of my hand in this way? I say, some people are born with big brains, Miss Pinhorn, and some with big figures. Look at that ass, Bulkeley, Lady B.'s man! He is as big as a Lifeguardsman, and he has no more education, nor no more ideas, than the beef he feeds on."

"La! Richard, whatever do you mean?"

"Pooh! How should *you* know what I mean? Lay them books straight. Put the volumes together, stupid! and the papers, and get the table ready for nursery tea, and don't go on there mopping your eyes, and making a fool of yourself, Mary Pinhorn!"

"Oh, your heart is a stone—a stone—a stone!" cries Mary, in a burst of tears. "And I wish it was hung round my neck, and I was at the bottom of the well, and—there's the hupstairs bell!" with which signal I suppose Mary disappeared, for I only heard a sort of grunt from Mr. Bedford; then the clatter of a dish or two, the wheeling of chairs and furniture, and then came a brief silence, which lasted until the entry of Dick's subordinate, Buttons, who laid the table for the children's and Miss Prior's tea.

So here was an old story told over again. Here was love unrequited, and a little passionate heart wounded and unhappy. My poor little Mary! As I am a sinner, I will give thee a crown when I go away, and not a couple of shillings, as my wont has been. Five shillings will not console thee much, but they will console thee a little. Thou wilt not imagine that I bribe thee with any privy thought of evil? Away! "Ich habe genossen das irdische Glück—ich habe—geliebt!"

At this juncture, I suppose Mrs. Prior must have entered the apartment, for though I could not hear her noiseless step, her little cracked voice came pretty clearly to me with a "Good afternoon, Mr. Bedford! Oh, dear me! what a many—many years we have been acquainted! To think of the pretty little printer's boy who used to come to Mr. Batchelor, and see you grown such a fine man!"

Bedford. How? I'm only five foot four.

Mrs. Prior. But such a fine figure, Bedford! You are—now indeed you are! Well, you are strong and I am weak. You are well, and I am weary and faint.

Bedford. The tea's a-coming directly, Mrs. Prior.

Mrs. Prior. Could you give me a glass of water first—and perhaps a little sherry in it, please. Oh, thank you. How good it is! How it revives a poor old wretch! and your cough, Bedford? How is your cough? I have brought you some lozenges for it—some of Sir Henry Halford's own prescribing for my dear husband, and——

Bedford (*abruptly*). I must go—never mind the cough now, Mrs. P.

Mrs. Prior. What's here? almonds and raisins, macaroons, preserved apricots, biscuits for dessert—and—la bless the man! how you sta—artled me!

Bedford. DON'T! Mrs. Prior: I beg and implore of you, keep your 'ands out of the dessert. I can't stand it. I *must* tell the governor if this game goes on.

Mrs. Prior. Ah! Mr. Bedford, it is for my poor—poor child at home; the doctor recommended her apricots. Ay, indeed, dear Bedford; he did, for her poor chest!

Bedford. And I'm blest if you haven't been at the sherry-bottle again! Oh, Mrs. P., you drive me wild—you do. I can't see Lovel put upon in this way. You know it's only last week I whopped the boy for stealing the sherry, and 'twas you done it.

Mrs. Prior (*passionately*). For a sick child, Bedford. What won't a mother do for her sick child?

Bedford. Your children's always sick. You're always taking things for 'em. I tell you, by the laws, I won't and mustn't stand it, Mrs. P.

Mrs. Prior (*with much spirit*). Go and tell your master, Bedford. Go and tell tales of me, sir. Go and have me dis-

missed out of this house. Go and have my daughter dismissed out of this house, and her poor mother brought to disgrace.

Bedford. Mrs. Prior—Mrs. Prior! you *have* been a-taking the sherry. A glass I don't mind: but you've been a-bringing that bottle again.

Mrs. Prior (*whimpering*). It's for Charlotte, Bedford! my poor delicate angel of a Shatty! she's ordered it, indeed she is!

Bedford. Confound your Shatty! I can't stand it, I mustn't, and won't, Mrs. P.!

Here a noise and clatter of other persons arriving interrupted the conversation between Lovel's major-domo and the mother of the children's governess, and I presently heard Master Pop's voice saying, "You're going to tea with us, Mrs. Prior?"

Mrs. Prior. Your kind dear grandmammas have asked me, dear Master Popham.

Pop. But you'd like to go to dinner best, wouldn't you? I dare say you have doosid bad dinners at your house. Haven't you, Mrs. Prior?

Cissy. Don't say doosid. It's a naughty word, Popham!

Pop. I *will* say doosid. Doo-oo-oosid! There! And I'll say worse words too, if I please, and you hold *your* tongue. What's there for tea? jam for tea? strawberries for tea? muffins for tea? That's it: strawberries and muffins for tea. And we'll go in to dessert besides: that's prime. I say, Miss Prior?

Miss Prior. What do you say, Popham?

Pop. Shouldn't you like to go in to dessert?—there's lots of good things there,—and have wine? Only when grandmamma tells her story about—about my grandfather and King George the what-d'ye-call-'im: King George the Fourth——

Cis. Ascended the throne, 1820; died at Windsor, 1830.

Pop. Bother Windsor! Well, when she tells that story, I can tell you *that* ain't very good fun.

Cis. And it's rude of you to speak in that way of your grandmamma, Pop!

Pop. And you'll hold *your* tongue, miss! And I shall speak as I like. And I'm a man, and I don't want any of your stuff and nonsense. I say, Mary, give us the marmalade!

Cis. You have had plenty to eat, and boys oughtn't to have so much.

Pop. Boys may have what they like. Boys can eat twice as

much as women. There, I don't want any more. Anybody may have the rest.

Mrs. Prior. What nice marmalade! I know some children, my dears, who——

Miss Prior (*imploringly*). Mamma, I beseech you——

Mrs. Prior. I know three dear children who very—very seldom have nice marmalade and delicious cake.

Pop. I know whom you mean: you mean Augustus, and Frederick, and Fanny—your children? Well, they shall have marmalade and cake.

Cis. Oh, yes, I will give them all mine.

Pop. (*who speaks, I think, as if his mouth was full*). I won't give 'em mine: but they can have another pot, you know. You have always got a basket with you; you know you have, Mrs. Prior. You had it the day you took the cold fowl.

Mrs. Prior. For the poor blind black man! Oh, how thankful he was to his dear young benefactors! He is a man and a brother, and to help him was most kind of you, dear Master Popham!

Pop. That black beggar my brother? He ain't my brother.

Mrs. Prior. No, dears, you have both the most lovely complexions in the world.

Pop. Bother complexions! I say, Mary, another pot of marmalade.

Mary. I don't know, Master Pop——

Pop. I *will* have it, I say. If you don't I'll smash everything, I will.

Cis. Oh, you naughty rude boy!

Pop. Hold your tongue, stupid! I will have it, I say.

Mrs. Prior. Do humour him, Mary, please. And I'm sure my dear children at home will be better for it.

Pop. There's your basket. Now put this cake in, and this bit of butter, and this sugar on the top of the butter. Hurray! hurray! Oh, what jolly fun! Here's some cake—no, I think I'll keep that; and, Mrs. Prior, tell Gus, and Fanny, and Fred, I sent it to 'em, and they shall never want for anything as long as Frederick Popham Baker Lovel, Esquire, can give it them. Did Gus like my grey greatcoat that I didn't want?

Miss Prior. You did not give him your new greatcoat?

Pop. It was beastly ugly, and I did give it him; and I'll give him this if I choose. And don't you speak to me; I'm

going to school, and I ain't going to have no governesses soon.

Mrs. Prior. Ah, dear child! what a nice coat it is; and how well my boy looks in it!

Miss Prior. Mother, mother! I implore you—mother——

Mr. Lovel enters. So the children at high tea! How d'ye do, Mrs. Prior? I think we shall be able to manage that little matter for your second boy, Mrs. Prior.

Mrs Prior. Heaven bless you,—bless you, my dear kind benefactor! Don't prevent me, Elizabeth: I *must* kiss his hand. There!

And here the second bell rings, and I enter the morning-room, and can see Mrs. Prior's great basket popped cunningly under the table-cloth. Her basket?—her *porte-manteau*, her *porte-bouteille*, her *porte-gâteau*, her *porte-pantalon*, her *porte-butin* in general. Thus I could see that every day Mrs. Prior visited Shrublands she gleaned greedily of the harvest. Well, Boaz was rich, and this ruthless Ruth was hungry and poor.

At the welcome summons of the second bell, Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington also made their appearance; the latter in the new cap which Mrs. Prior had admired, and which she saluted with a nod of smiling recognition: "Dear madam, it *is* lovely—I told you it was," whispers Mrs. P., and the wearer of the blue ribbons turned her bonny good-natured face towards the looking-glass, and I hope saw no reason to doubt Mrs. Prior's sincerity. As for Bonnington, I could perceive that he had been taking a little nap before dinner,—a practice by which the appetite is improved, I think, and the intellect prepared for the bland prandial conversation.

"Have the children been quite good?" asks papa of the governess.

"There are worse children, sir," says Miss Prior meekly.

"Make haste and have your dinner; we are coming in to dessert!" cries Pop.

"You would not have us go to dine without your grandmother?" papa asks. Dine without Lady Baker, indeed! I should have liked to see him go to dinner without Lady Baker.

Pending her Ladyship's arrival, papa and Mr. Bonnington walk to the open window, and gaze on the lawn and the towers of Putney rising over the wall.

"Ah, my good Mrs. Prior," cries Mrs. Bonnington, "those grandchildren of mine are sadly spoiled."

"Not by *you*, dear madam," says Mrs. Prior, with a look of commiseration. "Your dear children at home are, I am sure, perfect models of goodness. Is Master Edward well, ma'am? and Master Robert, and Master Richard, and dear funny little Master William! Ah, what blessings those children are to you! If a certain wilful little nephew of theirs took after them!"

"The little naughty wretch!" cried Mrs. Bonnington; "do you know, Prior, my grandson Frederick—(I don't know why they call him Popham in this house, or why he should be ashamed of his father's name)—do you know that Popham spilt the ink over my dear husband's bands, which he keeps in his great dictionary, and fought with my Richard, who is three years older than Popham, and actually beat his own uncle!"

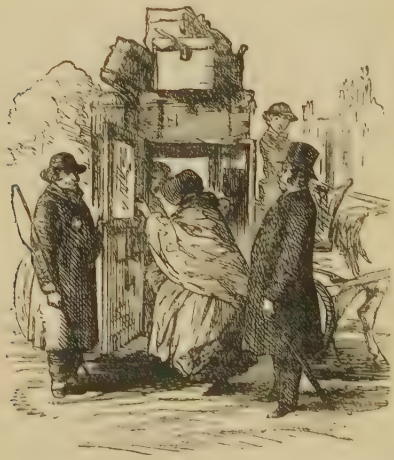
"Gracious goodness!" I cried; "you don't mean to say, ma'am, that Pop has been laying violent hands upon his venerable relative?" I feel ever so gentle a pull at my coat. Was it Miss Prior who warned me not to indulge in the sarcastic method with good Mrs. Bonnington?

"I don't know why you call my poor child a venerable relative," Mrs. B. remarks. "I know that Popham was very rude to him: and then Robert came to his brother, and that graceless little Popham took a stick, and my husband came out, and do you know Popham Lovel actually kicked Mr. Bonnington on the shins, and butted him like a little naughty ram; and if you think such conduct is a subject for ridicule—I *don't*, Mr. Batchelor."

"My dear—dear lady!" I cried, seizing her hand; for she was going to cry, and in woman's eye the unanswerable tear always raises a deuce of a commotion in my mind. "I would not for the world say a word that should willingly vex you; and as for Popham, I give you my honour, I think nothing would do that child so much good as a good whipping."

"He is spoiled, madam; we know by *whom*," says Mrs. Prior. "Dear Lady Baker! how that red does become your Ladyship!" In fact Lady B. sailed in at this juncture, arrayed in ribbons of scarlet; with many brooches, bangles, and other gimcracks ornamenting her plenteous person. And now her Ladyship having arrived, Bedford announced that dinner was served, and Lovel gave his mother-in-law an arm, whilst I offered mine to

Mrs. Bonnington to lead her to the adjoining dining-room. And the pacable kind soul speedily made peace with me. And we ate and drank of Lovel's best. And Lady Baker told us her celebrated anecdote of George the Fourth's compliment to her late dear husband, Sir Popham, when His Majesty visited Ireland. Mrs. Prior and her basket were gone when we repaired to the drawing-room: having been hunting all day, the hungry mother had returned with her prey to her wide-mouthed birdikins. Elizabeth looked very pale and handsome, reading



at her lamp. And whist and the little tray finished the second day at Shrublands.

I paced the moonlit walk alone when the family had gone to rest; and smoked my cigar under the tranquil stars. I had been some thirty hours in the house, and what a queer little drama was unfolding itself before me! What struggles and passions were going on here—what *certamina* and *motus animorum!* Here was Lovel, this willing horse; and what a crowd of relations, what a heap of luggage had the honest

fellow to carry! How that little Mrs. Prior was working, and scheming, and tacking, and flattering, and fawning, and plundering to be sure! And that serene Elizabeth, with what consummate skill, art, and prudence had she to act, to keep her place with two such rivals reigning over her! And Elizabeth not only kept her place, but she actually was liked by those two women! Why, Elizabeth Prior, my wonder and respect for thee increase with every hour during which I contemplate thy character! How is it that you live with those lionesses, and are not torn to pieces? What sops of flattery do you cast to them to appease them? Perhaps I do not think my Elizabeth brings up her two children very well, and, indeed, have seldom become acquainted with young people more odious. But is the fault hers, or is it Fortune's spite? How, with these two grandmothers spoiling the children alternately, can the governess do better than she does? How has she managed to lull their natural jealousy? I will work out that intricate problem, that I will, ere many days are over. And there are other mysteries which I perceive. There is poor Mary breaking her heart for the butler. That butler, why does he connive at the rogueries of Mrs. Prior? Ha! herein lies a mystery too; and I vow I will penetrate it ere long. So saying, I fling away the butt-end of the fragrant companion of my solitude, and enter into my room by the open French window just as Bedford walks in at the door. I had heard the voice of that worthy domestic warbling a grave melody from his pantry window as I paced the lawn. When the family goes to rest, Bedford passes a couple of hours in study in his pantry, perusing the newspapers and the new works, and forming his opinion on books and politics. Indeed, I have reason to believe that the letters in the *Putney Herald and Mortlake Monitor*, signed "A Voice from the Basement," were Mr. Bedford's composition.

"Come to see all safe for the night, sir, and the windows closed before you turn in," Mr. Dick remarks. "Best not leave 'em open even if you are asleep inside—catch cold—many bad people about. Remember Bromley murder!—Enter at French windows—you cry out—cut your throat—and there's a fine paragraph for papers next morning!"

"What a good voice you have, Bedford!" I say; "I heard you warbling just now—a famous bass, on my word!"

"Always fond of music—sing when I'm cleaning my plate—

learned in old Beak Street. *She* used to teach me," and he points towards the upper floors.

"What a little chap you were then!—when you came for my proofs for the *Museum*," I remark..

"I ain't a very big one now, sir; but it ain't the big ones that do the best work," remarks the butler.

"I remember Miss Prior saying that you were as old as she was."

"Hm! and I scarce came up to her—eh—elbow." (Bedford had constantly to do battle with the aspirates. He conquered them, but you could see there was a struggle.)

"And it was Miss Prior taught you to sing?" I say, looking him full in the face.

He dropped his eyes—he could not bear my scrutiny. I knew the whole story now.

"When Mrs. Lovel died at Naples, Miss Prior brought home the children, and you acted as courier to the whole party?"

"Yes, sir," says Bedford. "We had the carriage, and of course poor Mrs. L. was sent home by sea, and I brought home the young ones, and—and the rest of the family. I could say, Avanti! avanti! to the Italian postillions, and ask for des chevaux when we crossed the Halps—the Alps,—I beg your pardon, sir."

"And you used to see the party to their rooms at the inns, and call them up in the morning, and you had a blunderbuss in the rumble to shoot the robbers?"

"Yes," says Bedford.

"And it was a pleasant time?"

"Yes," says Bedford, groaning and hanging down his miserable head. "Oh, yes, it was a pleasant time."

He turned away; he stamped his foot; he gave a sort of imprecation; he pretended to look at some books, and dust them with a napkin which he carried. I saw the matter at once. "Poor Dick!" says I.

"It's the old—old story," says Dick. "It's you and the Hirish girl over again, sir. I'm only a servant, I know; but I'm a—— Confound it!" And here he stuck his fists into his eyes.

"And this is the reason you allow old Mrs. Prior to steal the sherry and the sugar?" I ask.

"How do you know that?– you remember how she prigged in Beak Street?" asks Bedford fiercely.

"I overheard you and her just before dinner," I said.

"You had better go and tell Lovel—have me turned out of the house. That's the best thing that can be done," cries Bedford again, fiercely, stamping his feet.

"It is always my custom to do as much mischief as I possibly can, Dick Bedford," I say, with fine irony.

He seizes my hand. "No, you're a trump—everybody knows that; beg pardon, sir; but you see I'm so—so—dash!—miserable, that I hardly know whether I'm walking on my head or my heels."

"You haven't succeeded in touching her heart, then, my poor Dick?" I said.

Dick shook his head. "She has no heart," he said. "If she ever had any, that fellar in India took it away with him. She don't care for anybody alive. She likes me as well as any one. I think she appreciates me, you see, sir; she can't 'elp it—I'm blest if she can. She knows I am a better man than most of the chaps that come down here,—I am, if I wasn't a servant. If I were only an apothecary—like that grinning jackass who comes here from Barnes in his gig, and wants to marry her—she'd have me. She keeps him on, and encourages him—she can do that cleverly enough. And the old dragon fancies she is fond of him. Psha! Why am I making a fool of myself?—I am only a servant. Mary's good enough for me; *she'll* have me fast enough. I beg your pardon, sir; I am making a fool of myself; I ain't the first, sir. Good-night, sir; hope you'll sleep well." And Dick departs to his pantry and his private cares, and I think, "Here is another victim who is writhing under the merciless arrows of the universal torturer."

"He is a very singular person," Miss Prior remarked to me, as, next day, I happened to be walking on Putney Heath by her side, while her young charges trotted on and quarrelled in the distance. "I wonder where the world will stop next, dear Mr. Batchelor, and how far the march of intellect will proceed! Any one so free, and easy, and cool, as this Mr. Bedford, I never saw. When we were abroad with poor Mrs. Lovel, he picked up French and Italian in quite a surprising way. He takes books down from the library now: the most abstruse works—works that *I* couldn't pretend to read, I'm sure. Mr. Bonnington

says he has taught himself history, and Horace in Latin, and algebra, and I don't know what besides. He talked to the servants and tradespeople at Naples much better than *I* could, I assure you." And Elizabeth tosses up her head heavenwards, as if she would ask of yonder skies how such a man could possibly be as good as herself.

She stepped along the Heath—slim, stately, healthy, tall—her firm neat foot treading swiftly over the grass. She wore her blue spectacles, but I think she could have looked at the sun without the glasses and without wincing. That sun was playing with her tawny wavy ringlets, and scattering gold-dust over them.

"It is wonderful," said I, admiring her, "how these people give themselves airs, and try to imitate their betters!"

"Most extraordinary!" says Bessy. She had not one particle of humour in all her composition. I think Dick Bedford was right; and she had no heart. Well, she had famous lungs, health, appetite, and with these one may get through life not uncomfortably.

"You and Saint Cecilia got on pretty well, Bessy?" I ask.

"Saint who?"

"The late Mrs. L."

"Oh, Mrs. Lovel:—yes. What an odd person you are! I did not understand whom you meant," says Elizabeth the downright.

"Not a good temper, I should think! She and Fred fought?"

"*He* never fought."

"I think a little bird has told me that she was not averse to the admiration of our sex?"

"I don't speak ill of my friends, Mr. Batchelor," replies Elizabeth the prudent.

"You must have difficult work with the two old ladies at Shrublands?"

Bessy shrugs her shoulders. "A little management is necessary in all families," she says. "The ladies are naturally a little jealous one of the other; but they are both of them not unkind to me in the main; and I have to bear no more than other women in my situation. It was not all pleasure at St. Boniface, Mr. Batchelor, with my uncle and aunt. I suppose all governesses have their difficulties! and I must get over mine as best I can, and be thankful for the liberal salary which your

kindness procured for me, and which enables me to help my poor mother and my brothers and sisters."

"I suppose you give all your money to her?"

"Nearly all. They must have it; poor mamma has so many mouths to feed."

"And notre petit cœur, Bessy?" I ask, looking in her fresh face. "Have we replaced the Indian officer?"

Another shrug of the shoulders. "I suppose we all get over those follies, Mr. Batchelor. I remember somebody else was in a sad way too,"—and she looks askance at the victim of Glorvina. "*My* folly is dead and buried long ago. I have to work so hard for mamma, and my brothers and sisters, that I have no time for such nonsense."

Here a gentleman in a natty gig, with a high-trotting horse, came spanking towards us over the common, and with my profound knowledge of human nature, I saw at once that the servant by the driver's side was a little doctor's boy, and the gentleman himself was a neat and trim general practitioner.

He stared at me grimly, as he made a bow to Miss Bessy. I saw jealousy and suspicion in his aspect.

"Thank you, dear Mr. Drencher," says Bessy, "for your kindness to mamma and our children. You are going to call at Shrublands? Lady Baker was indisposed this morning. She says when she can't have Doctor Piper, there's nobody like you." And this artful one smiles blandly on Mr. Drencher.

"I have got the workhouse, and a case at Roehampton, and I shall be at Shrublands *about two*, Miss Prior," says that young Doctor, whom Bedford had called a grinning jackass. He laid an eager emphasis on the *two*. Go to! I know what two and two mean as well as most people, Mr. Drencher! Glances of rage he shot at me from out his gig. The serpents of that miserable Æsculapius unwound themselves from his rod, and were gnawing at his swollen heart!

"He has a good practice, Mr. Drencher?" I ask, sly rogue as I am.

"He is very good to mamma and our children. His practice with *them* does not profit him much," says Bessy.

"And I suppose our walk will be over before two o'clock?" remarks that slyboots who is walking with Miss Prior.

"I hope so. Why, it is our dinner-time; and this walk on the heath does make one so hungry!" cries the governess.

"Bessy Prior," I said, "it is my belief that you no more want spectacles than a cat in the twilight." To which she replied, that I was such a strange odd man, she really could not understand me.

We were back at Shrublands at two. Of course we must not keep the children's dinner waiting: and of course Mr. Drencher drove up at five minutes past two, with his gig-horse all in a lather. I, who knew the secrets of the house, was amused to see the furious glances which Bedford darted from the sideboard, or as he served the Doctor with cutlets. Drencher, for his part, scowled at me. I, for my part, was easy, witty, pleasant, and I trust profoundly wicked and malicious. I bragged about my aristocratic friends to Lady Baker. I trumped her old-world stories about George the Fourth at Dublin with the latest dandified intelligence I had learned at the Club. That the young Doctor should be dazzled and disgusted was, I own, my wish; and I enjoyed his rage as I saw him choking with jealousy over his victuals.

But why was Lady Baker sulky with me? How came it, my fashionable stories had no effect upon that polite matron? Yesterday at dinner she had been gracious enough: and turning her back upon those poor simple Bonningtons, who knew nothing of the *beau monde* at all, had condescended to address herself specially to me several times with an "I need not tell *you*, Mr. Batchelor, that the Duchess of Dorsetshire's maiden name was De Bobus;" or, "You know very well that the etiquette at the Lord Lieutenant's balls, at Dublin Castle, is for the wives of baronets to"—&c. &c.

Now whence, I say, did it arise that Lady Baker, who had been kind and familiar with me on Sunday, should on Monday turn me a shoulder as cold as that lamb which I offered to carve for the family, and which remained from yesterday's quarter? I had thought of staying but two days at Shrublands. I generally am bored at country-houses. I was going away on the Monday morning, but Lovel, when he and I and the children and Miss Prior breakfasted together before he went to business, pressed me to stay so heartily and sincerely that I agreed, gladly enough, to remain. I could finish a scene or two of my tragedy at my leisure; besides, there were one or two little comedies going on in the house which inspired me with no little curiosity.

Lady Baker growled at me, then, during lunch-time. She

addressed herself in whispers and hints to Mr. Drencher. She had in her own man, Bulkeley, and bullied him. She desired to know whether she was to have the barouche or not; and when informed that it was at her Ladyship's service, said it was a great deal too cold for the open carriage, and that she would have the brougham. When she was told that Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington had impounded the brougham, she said she had no idea of people taking other people's carriages: and when Mr. Bedford remarked that her Ladyship had her choice that morning, and had chosen the barouche, she said, "I didn't speak to you, sir; and I will thank you not to address me until you are spoken to!" She made the place so hot that I began to wish I had quitted it.

"And pray, Miss Prior, where is Captain Baker to sleep," she asked, "now that the ground-floor room is engaged?"

Miss Prior meekly said, "Captain Baker would have the pink room."

"The room on my landing-place, without double doors? Impossible! Clarence is always smoking. Clarence will fill the whole house with his smoke. He shall *not* sleep in the pink room. I expected the ground-floor room for him, which—a—this gentleman persists in not vacating." And the dear creature looked me full in the face.

"This gentleman smokes, too, and is so comfortable where he is, that he proposes to remain there," I say, with a bland smile.

"Haspic of plovers' eggs, sir," says Bedford, handing a dish over my back. And he actually gave me a little dig, and growled, "Go it—give it her!"

"There is a capital inn on the Heath," I continue, peeling one of my opal favourites. "If Captain Baker must smoke, he may have a room there."

"Sir! my son does not live at inns," cries Lady Baker.

"O grandma! don't he though? And wasn't there a row at the 'Star and Garter;' and didn't pa pay Uncle Clarence's bill there, though?"

"Silence, Popham! Little boys should be seen and not heard," says Cissy. "Shouldn't little boys be seen and not heard, Miss Prior?"

"They shouldn't insult their grandmothers. O my Cecilia—my Cecilia!" cries Lady Baker, lifting her hand.

"You shan't hit me! I say you shan't hit me!" roars Pop, starting back, and beginning to square at his enraged ancestress. The scene was growing painful. And there was that rascal of a Bedford choking with suppressed laughter at the sideboard. Bulkeley, her Ladyship's man, stood calm as fate; but young Buttons burst out in a guffaw; on which, I assure you, Lady Baker looked as savage as Lady Macbeth.

"Am I to be insulted by my daughter's servants?" cries Lady Baker. "I will leave the house this instant."

"At what hour will your Ladyship have the barouche?" says Bedford, with perfect gravity.

If Mr. Drencher had whipped out a lancet and bled Lady B. on the spot, he would have done her good. I shall draw the curtain over this sad—this humiliating scene. Drop, little curtain, on this absurd little act!

CHAPTER IV.

A Black Sheep.

THE being for whom my friend Dick Bedford seemed to have a special contempt and aversion, was Mr. Bulkeley, the tall footman in attendance upon Lovel's dear mother-in-law. One of the causes of Bedford's wrath, the worthy fellow explained to me. In the servants' hall, Bulkeley was in the habit of speaking in disrespectful and satirical terms of his mistress, enlarging upon her many foibles, and describing her pecuniary difficulties to the many *habitués* of that second social circle at Shrublands. The hold which Mr. Bulkeley had over his lady lay in a long unsettled account of wages, which her Ladyship was quite disinclined to discharge. And, in spite of this insolvency, the footman must have found his profit in the place, for he continued to hold it from year to year, and to fatten on his earnings, such as they were. My Lady's dignity did not allow her to travel without this huge personage in her train; and a great comfort it must have been to her, to reflect that in all the country houses which she visited (and she would go wherever she could force an invitation), her attendant freely explained himself regarding her peculiarities, and made his brother servants aware of his mistress's embarrassed condition. And yet the woman,

whom I suppose no soul alive respected (unless, haply, she herself had a hankering delusion that she was a respectable woman), thought that her position in life forbade her to move abroad without a maid, and this hulking incumbrance in plush; and never was seen anywhere, in watering-place, country-house, hotel, unless she was so attended.

Between Bedford and Bulkeley, then, there was feud and mutual hatred. Bedford chafed the big man by constant sneers and sarcasms, which penetrated the other's dull hide, and caused him frequently to assert that he would punch Dick's ugly head off. The housekeeper had frequently to interpose, and fling her matronly arms between these men of war; and perhaps Bedford was forced to be still at times, for Bulkeley was nine inches taller than himself, and was perpetually bragging of his skill and feats as a bruiser. This sultan may also have wished to fling his pocket-handkerchief to Miss Mary Pinhorn, who, though she loved Bedford's wit and cleverness, might also be not insensible to the magnificent chest, calves, whiskers, of Mr. Bulkeley. On this delicate subject, however, I can't speak. The men hated each other. You have, no doubt, remarked in your experience of life, that when men *do* hate each other, about a woman, or some other cause, the real reason is never assigned. You say, "The conduct of such and such a man to his grandmother—his behaviour in selling that horse to Benson—his manner of brushing his hair down the middle"—or what you will, "makes him so offensive to me that I can't endure him." His verses, therefore, are mediocre; his speeches in Parliament are utter failures; his practice at the bar is dwindling every year; his powers (always small) are utterly leaving him, and he is repeating his confounded jokes until they quite nauseate. Why, only about myself, and within these three days, I read a nice little article—written in sorrow, you know, not in anger—by our eminent *confrère* Wiggins, deploring the decay of &c. &c. And Wiggins's little article which was not found suitable for a certain Magazine?—*Allons donc!* The drunkard says the pickled salmon gave him the headache; the man who hates us gives *a* reason, but not *the* reason. Bedford was angry with Bulkeley for abusing his mistress at the servant's table? Yes. But for what else besides? I don't care—nor possibly does your worship, the exalted reader, for these low vulgar kitchen quarrels.

Out of that ground-floor room, then, I would not move in

spite of the utmost efforts of my Lady Baker's broad shoulder to push me out; and with many grins that evening, Bedford complimented me on my gallantry in routing the enemy at luncheon. I think he may possibly have told his master, for Lovel looked very much alarmed and uneasy when we greeted each other on his return from the City, but became more composed when Lady Baker appeared at the second dinner-bell, without a trace on her fine countenance of that storm which had caused all her waves to heave with such commotion at noon. How finely some people, by the way, can hang up quarrels—or pop them into a drawer—as they do their work, when dinner is announced, and take them out again at a convenient season! Baker was mild, gentle, a thought sad and sentimental—tenderly interested about her dear son and daughter in Ireland, whom she *must* go and see—quite easy in hand, in a word, and to the immense relief of all of us. She kissed Lovel on retiring, and prayed blessings on her Frederick. She pointed to the picture: nothing could be more melancholy or more gracious.

"*She* go!" says Mr. Bedford to me at night—"not she. She knows when she's well off; was obliged to turn out of Bakerstown before she came here: that brute Bulkeley told me so. She's always quarrelling with her son and his wife. Angels don't grow everywhere as they do at Putney, Mr. B.! You gave it her well to-day at lunch, you did though!" During my stay at Shrublands, Mr. Bedford paid me a regular evening visit in my room, set the *carte du pays* before me, and in his curt way acquainted me with the characters of the inmates of the house, and the incidents occurring therein.

Captain Clarence Baker did not come to Shrublands on the day when his anxious mother wished to clear out my nest (and expel the amiable bird in it) for her son's benefit. I believe an important fight, which was to come off in the Essex Marshes, and which was postponed in consequence of the interposition of the county magistrates, was the occasion, or at any rate the pretext, of the Captain's delay. "He likes seeing fights better than going to 'em, the Captain does," my major-domo remarked. "His regiment was ordered to India, and he sold out: climate don't agree with his precious health. The Captain ain't been here ever so long, not since poor Mrs. L.'s time, before Miss P. came here: Captain Clarence and his sister had a tremendous quarrel together. He was up to all sorts of pranks, the Captain was.

Not a good lot, by any means, I should say, Mr. Batchelor." And here Bedford begins to laugh. "Did you ever read, sir, a farce called 'Raising the Wind'? There's plenty of Jeremy Diddlers now, Captain Jeremy Diddlers and Lady Jeremy Diddlers too. Have you such a thing as half-a-crown about you? If you have, don't invest it in some folks' pockets—that's all. Beg your pardon, sir, if I am bothering you with talking."

As long as I was at Shrublands, and ready to partake of breakfast with my kind host and his children and their governess, Lady Baker had her own breakfast taken to her room. But when there were no visitors in the house, she would come groaning out of her bedroom to be present at the morning meal; and not uncommonly would give the little company anecdotes of the departed saint, under whose invocation, as it were, we were assembled, and whose simpering effigy looked down upon us, over her harp, and from the wall. The eyes of the portrait followed you about, as portraits' eyes so painted will; and those glances, as it seemed to me, still domineered over Lovel, and made him quail as they had done in life. Yonder, in the corner, was Cecilia's harp, with its leathern cover. I likened the skin to that drum which the dying Zisca ordered should be made out of his hide, to be beaten before the hosts of his people and inspire terror. *Vous concevez*, I did not say to Lovel at breakfast, as I sat before the ghostly musical instrument, "My dear fellow, that skin of Cordovan leather belonging to your defunct Cecilia's harp is like the hide which," &c.; but I confess, at first, I used to have a sort of *crawly* sensation, as of a sickly genteel ghost flitting about the place, in an exceedingly peevish humour, trying to scold and command, and finding her defunct voice couldn't be heard—trying to re-illumine her extinguished leers and faded smiles and ogles, and finding no one admired or took note. In the grey of the gloaming, in the twilight corner where stands the shrouded companion of song—what is that white figure flickering round the silent harp? Once, as we were assembled in the room at afternoon tea, a bird, entering at the open window, perched on the instrument. Popham dashed at it. Lovel was deep in conversation upon the wine-duties with a member of Parliament he had brought down to dinner. Lady Baker, who was, if I may use the expression, "jawing," as usual, and telling one of her tremendous stories about the Lord Lieutenant to

Mr. Bonnington, took no note of the incident. Elizabeth did not seem to remark it: what was a bird on a harp to her, but a sparrow perched on a bit of leather casing! All the ghosts in Putney churchyard might rattle all their bones, and would not frighten that stout spirit!

I was amused at a precaution which Bedford took, and somewhat alarmed at the distrust towards Lady Baker which he exhibited, when, one day on my return from town—whither I had made an excursion of four or five hours—I found my bedroom door locked, and Dick arrived with the key. "He's wrote to say he's coming this evening, and if he had come when you was away, Lady B. was capable of turning your things out, and putting his in, and taking her oath she believed you was going to leave. The long-bows Lady B. do pull are perfectly awful, Mr. B.! So it was long-bow to long-bow, Mr. Batchelor; and I said you had took the key in your pocket, not wishing to have your papers disturbed. She tried the lawn window, but I had bolted that, and the Captain will have the pink room, after all, and must smoke up the chimney. I should have liked to see him, or you, or any one do it in poor Mrs. L.'s time—I just should."

During my visit to London, I had chanced to meet my friend Captain Fitzb—dle, who belongs to a dozen Clubs, and knows something of every man in London. "Know anything of Clarence Baker? Of course I do," says Fitz; "and if you want any *renseignement*, my dear fellow, I have the honour to inform you that a blacker little sheep does not trot the London *pavé*. Wherever that ingenious officer's name is spoken—at Tattersall's, at his Clubs, in his late regiments, in men's society, in ladies' society, in that expanding and most agreeable circle which you may call no society at all—a chorus of maledictions rises up at the mention of Baker. Know anything of Clarence Baker? My dear fellow, enough to make your hair turn white, unless (as I sometimes fondly imagine) nature has already performed that process, when of course I can't pretend to act upon mere hair-dye." (The whiskers of the individual who addressed me, innocent, stared at me in the face as he spoke, and were dyed of the most unblushing purple.) "Clarence Baker, sir, is a young man who would have been invaluable in Sparta as a warning against drunkenness and an exemplar of it. He has helped the regimental surgeon to some most interesting experiments in

delirium tremens. He is known, and not in the least trusted, in every billiard-room in Brighton, Canterbury, York, Sheffield —on every pavement which has rung with the clink of dragoon boot-heels. By a wise system of revoking at whist he has lost games which have caused not only his partners, but his opponents and the whole Club, to admire him and to distrust him: long before and since he was of age, he has written his eminent name to bills which have been dishonoured, and has nobly pleaded his minority as a reason for declining to pay. From the garrison towns where he has been quartered, he has carried away not only the hearts of the milliners, but their gloves, haberdashery, and perfumery. He has had controversies with Cornet Green regarding horse transactions; disputed turf accounts with Lieutenant Brown; and betting and backgammon differences with Captain Black. From all I have heard he is the worthy son of his admirable mother. And I bet you even on the four events, if you stay three days in a country-house with him—which appears to be your present happy idea—that he will quarrel with you, insult you and apologise; that he will intoxicate himself more than once; that he will offer to play cards with you, and not pay on losing (if he wins, I perhaps need not state what his conduct will be); and that he will try to borrow money from you, and most likely from your servant, before he goes away." So saying, the sententious Fitz strutted up the steps of one of his many club-haunts in Pall Mall, and left me forewarned, and I trust forearmed, against Captain Clarence and all his works.

The adversary, when at length I came in sight of him, did not seem very formidable. I beheld a weakly little man with Chinese eyes, and pretty little feet and hands, whose pallid countenance told of Finishes and Casinos. His little chest and fingers were decorated with many jewels. A perfume of tobacco hung round him. His little moustache was twisted with an elaborate gummy curl. I perceived that the little hand which twirled the moustache shook woefully: and from the little chest there came a cough surprisingly loud and dismal.

He was lying on a sofa as I entered, and the children of the house were playing round him. "If you are our uncle, why didn't you come to see us oftener?" asks Popham.

"How should I know that you were such uncommonly nice children?" asked the Captain.

"We're not nice to you," says Popham. "Why do you cough so? Mamma used to cough. And why does your hand shake so?"

"My hand shakes because I am ill: and I cough because I'm ill. Your mother died of it, and I dare say I shall too."

"I hope you'll be good, and repent before you die, uncle, and I will lend you some nice books," says Cecilia.

"Oh, bother books!" cries Pop.

"And I hope *you'll* be good, Popham," and "You hold *your* tongue, miss," and "I shall," and "I shan't," and "You're another," and "I'll tell Miss Prior,"—"Go and tell, telltale,"—"Boo"—"Boo"—"Boo"—"Boo"—and I don't know what more exclamations came tumultuously and rapidly from these dear children, as their uncle lay before them, a handkerchief to his mouth, his little feet high raised on the sofa cushions.

Captain Baker turned a little eye towards me, as I entered the room, but did not change his easy and elegant posture. When I came near to the sofa where he reposed, he was good enough to call out—

"Glass of sherry!"

"It's Mr. Batchelor; it isn't Bedford, uncle," says Cissy.

"Mr. Batchelor ain't got any sherry in his pocket: have you, Mr. Batchelor? You ain't like old Mrs. Prior, always pocketing things, are you?" cries Pop, and falls a-laughing at the ludicrous idea of my being mistaken for Bedford.

"Beg your pardon. How should I know, you know?" drawls the invalid on the sofa. "Everybody's the same now, you see."

"Sir!" say I, and "Sir" was all I could say. The fact is, I could have replied with something remarkably neat and cutting, which would have transfixed the languid little jackanapes who dared to mistake me for a footman; but, you see, I only thought of my repartee some eight hours afterwards when I was lying in bed, and I am sorry to own that a great number of my best *bonmots* have been made in that way. So, as I had not the pungent remark ready when wanted, I can't say I said it to Captain Baker, but I dare say I turned very red, and said "Sir!" and—and in fact that was all.

"You were goin' to say somethin'?" asked the Captain affably.

"You know my friend Mr. Fitzboodle, I believe?" said I; the fact is, I really did not know what to say.

"Some mistake—think not."

"He is a member of the 'Flag Club,'" I remarked, looking my young fellow hard in the face.

"I ain't. There's a set of cads in that Club that will say anything."

"You may not know him, sir, but he seemed to know you very well. Are we to have any tea, children?" I say, flinging myself down on an easy-chair, taking up a magazine, and adopting an easy attitude, though I dare say my face was as red as a turkey-cock's, and I was boiling over with rage.

As we had a very good breakfast and a profuse luncheon at Shrublands, of course we could not support nature till dinner-time without a five-o'clock tea; and this was the meal for which I pretended to ask. Bedford, with his silver kettle, and his buttony satellite, presently brought in this refection, and of course the children bawled out to him—

"Bedford—Bedford! Uncle mistook Mr. Batchelor for you."

"I could not be mistaken for a more honest man, Pop," said I. And the bearer of the tea-urn gave me a look of gratitude and kindness which, I own, went far to restore my ruffled equanimity.

"Since you are the butler, will you get me a glass of sherry and a biscuit?" says the Captain. And Bedford retiring, returned presently with the wine.

The young gentleman's hand shook so, that in order to drink his wine, he had to surprise it, as it were, and seize it with his mouth, when a shake brought the glass near his lips. He drained the wine and held out his hand for another glass. The hand was steadier now.

"You the man who was here before?" asks the Captain.

"Six years ago, when you were here, sir," says the butler.

"What! I ain't changed, I suppose?"

"Yes, you are, sir."

"Then, how the dooce do you remember me?"

"You forgot to pay me some money you borrowed of me, one pound five, sir," says Bedford, whose eyes slyly turned in my direction.

And here, according to her wont at this meal, the dark-robed Miss Prior entered the room. She was coming forward with her ordinarily erect attitude and firm step, but paused in her walk an instant, and when she came to us, I thought, looked

remarkably pale. She made a slight curtsey, and it must be confessed that Captain Baker rose up from his sofa for a moment when she appeared. She then sat down, with her back towards him, turning towards herself the table and its tea apparatus.

At this board my Lady Baker found us assembled when she returned from her afternoon drive. She flew to her darling reprobate of a son. She took his hand, she smoothed back his hair from his damp forehead. "My darling child," cries this fond mother, "what a pulse you have got!"

"I suppose, because I've been drinking," says the prodigal.

"Why didn't you come out driving with me? The afternoon was lovely!"

"To pay visits at Richmond? Not as I knows on, ma'am," says the invalid. "Conversation with elderly ladies about poodles, Bible societies, that kind of thing? It must be a doosid lovely afternoon that would make me like that sort of game." And here comes a fit of coughing, over which mamma ejaculates her sympathy.

"Kick—kick—killin' myself!" gasps out the Captain; "know I am. No man *can* lead my life, and stand it. Dyin' by inches! Dyin' by whole yards, by Jo—ho—hove, I am!" Indeed, he was as bad in health as in morals, this graceless Captain.

"That man of Lovel's seems a d—— insolent beggar," he presently and ingenuously remarks.

"Oh, uncle, you mustn't say those words!" cries niece Cissy.

"He's a man, and may say what he likes, and so will I, when I'm a man. Yes, and I'll say it now, too, if I like," cries Master Popham.

"Not to give me pain, Popham? Will you?" asks the governess.

On which the boy says—"Well, who wants to hurt you, Miss Prior?"

And our colloquy ends by the arrival of the man of the house from the City.

What I have admired in some dear women is their capacity for quarrelling and for reconciliation. As I saw Lady Baker hanging round her son's neck, and fondling his scanty ringlets, I remembered the awful stories with which in former days she used to entertain us regarding this reprobate. Her heart was pincushioned with his filial crimes. Under her chestnut front her

Ladyship's real head of hair was grey, in consequence of his iniquities. His precocious appetite had devoured the greater part of her jointure. He had treated her many dangerous illnesses with indifference: had been the worst son, the worst brother, the most ill-conducted schoolboy, the most immoral young man—the terror of households, the Lovelace of garrison towns, the perverter of young officers; in fact, Lady Baker did not know how she supported existence at all under the agony occasioned by his crimes, and it was only from the possession of a more than ordinarily strong sense of religion that she was enabled to bear her burden.

The Captain himself explained these alternating maternal caresses and quarrels in his easy way.

"Saw how the old lady kissed and fondled me?" says he to his brother-in-law. "Quite refreshin', ain't it? Hang me, I thought she was goin' to send me a bit of sweetbread off her own plate. Came up to my room last night, wanted to tuck me up in bed, and abused my brother to me for an hour. You see, when I'm in favour, she always abuses Baker; when *he's* in favour she abuses me to him. And my sister-in-law, didn't she give it my sister-in-law! Oh! I'll trouble you. And poor Cecilia—why, hang me, Mr. Batchelor, she used to go on—this bottle's corked, I'm hanged if it isn't—to go on about Cecilia, and call her—Hullo!"

Here he was interrupted by our host, who said sternly—

"Will you please to forget those quarrels, or not mention them here? Will you have more wine, Batchelor?"

And Lovel rises, and haughtily stalks out of the room. To do Lovel justice, he had a great contempt and dislike for his young brother-in-law, which, with his best magnanimity, he could not at all times conceal.

So our host stalks towards the drawing-room, leaving Captain Clarence sipping wine.

"Don't go too," says the Captain. "He's a confounded rum fellow, my brother-in-law is. He's a confounded ill-conditioned fellow too. They always are, you know, these tradesmen fellows, these half-bred 'uns. I used to tell my sister so; but she *would* have him, because he had such lots of money, you know. And she threw over a fellar she was very fond of; and I told her she'd regret it. I told Lady B. she'd regret it. It was all Lady B.'s doing. She made Cissy throw the fellar over.

He was a bad match, certainly, Tom Mountain was; and not a clever fellow, you know, or that sort of thing; but, at any rate, he was a gentleman, and better than a confounded sugar-baking beggar out of Ratcliff Highway."

"You seem to find that claret very good," I remark, speaking, I may say, Socratically, to my young friend, who had been swallowing bumper after bumper.

"Claret good? Yes, doosid good!"

"Well, you see our confounded sugar-baker gives you his best."

"And why shouldn't he, hang him? Why, the fellow chokes with money. What does it matter to him how much he spends? You're a poor man, I dare say. You don't look as if you were overflush of money. Well, if *you* stood a good dinner, it would be all right—I mean it would show—you understand me, you know. But a sugar-baker with ten thousand a year, what does it matter to him, bottle of claret more—less?"

"Let us go in to the ladies," I say.

"Go in to mother! *I* don't want to go in to my mother," cries out the artless youth. "And I don't want to go in to the sugar-baker, hang him! and I don't want to go in to the children; and I'd rather have a glass of brandy-and-water with you, old boy. Here you! What's your name? Bedford! I owe you five-and-twenty shillings, do I, old Bedford? Give us a glass of Schnapps, and I'll pay you! Look here, Batchelor. I hate that sugar-baker. Two years ago, I drew a bill on him, and he wouldn't pay it—perhaps he would have paid it, but my sister wouldn't let him. And, I say, shall we go and have a cigar in your room? My mother's been abusing you to me like fun this morning. She abuses everybody. She used to abuse Cissy. Cissy used to abuse her—used to fight like two cats"——

And if I narrate this conversation, dear Spartan youth! if I show thee this Helot maundering in his cups, it is that from his odious example thou may'st learn to be moderate in the use of thine own. Has the enemy who has entered thy mouth ever stolen away thy brains? Has wine ever caused thee to blab secrets; to utter egotisms and follies? Beware of it. Has it ever been thy friend at the end of the hard day's work, the cheery companion of thy companions, the promoter of harmony, kindness, harmless social pleasure? Be thankful for it. Three years since, when the comet was blazing in the autumnal sky, I

stood on the château-steps of a great claret proprietor. "Boirai-je de ton vin, O comète?" I said, addressing the luminary with the flaming tail. "Shall those generous bunches which you ripen yield their juices for me *morituro?*" It was a solemn thought. Ah! my dear brethren! who knows the Order of the Fates? When shall we pass the Gloomy Gates? Which of us goes, which of us waits to drink those famous Fifty-eights? A sermon, upon my word! And pray why not a little homily on an autumn eve over a purple cluster? . . . If that rickety boy had only drunk claret, I warrant you his tongue would not have blabbed, his hand would not have shaken, his wretched little brain and body would not have reeled with fever.

"'Gad," said he next day to me, "cut again last night. Have an idea that I abused Lovel. When I have a little wine on board, always speak my mind, don't you know? Last time I was here in my poor sister's time, said somethin' to her, don't quite know what it was, somethin' confoundedly true and unpleasant I dare say. I think it was about a fellow she used to go on with before she married the sugar-baker. And I got orders to quit, by Jove, sir—neck and crop, sir, and no mistake! And we gave it one another over the stairs. Oh, my! we did pitch in!—and that was the last time I ever saw Cecilia—give you my word. A doosid unforgiving woman my poor sister was, and between you and me, Batchelor, as great a flirt as ever threw a fellar over. You should have heard her and my Lady B. go on, that's all!—Well, mamma, are you going out for a drive in the coachy-poachy?—Not as I knows on, thank you, as I before had the honour to observe. Mr. Batchelor and me are going to play a little game at billiards." We did, and I won; and, from that day to this, have never been paid my little winnings.

On the day after the doughty Captain's arrival, Miss Prior, in whose face I had remarked a great expression of gloom and care, neither made her appearance at breakfast nor at the children's dinner. "Miss Prior was a little unwell," Lady Baker said, with an air of most perfect satisfaction. "Mr. Drencher will come to see her this afternoon, and prescribe for her, I dare say," adds her Ladyship, nodding and winking a roguish eye at me. I was at a loss to understand what was the point of humour which amused Lady P., until she herself explained it.

"My good sir," she said, "I think Miss Prior is not at all *averse* to being ill." And the nods recommenced.

"As how?" I ask.

"To being ill, or at least to calling in the medical man."

"Attachment between governess and Sawbones I make bold for to presume?" says the Captain.

"Precisely, Clarence—a very fitting match. I saw the affair, even before Miss Prior owned it—that is to say, she has not denied it. She says she can't afford to marry, that she has children enough at home in her brothers and sisters. She is a well-principled young woman, and does credit, Mr. Batchelor, to your recommendation, and the education she has received from her uncle, the Master of St. Boniface."

"Cissy to school; Pop to Eton; and Miss What-d'you-call to grind the pestle in Sawbones's back-shop: I see!" says Captain Clarence. "He seems a low vulgar blackguard, that Sawbones."

"Of course, my love, what can you expect from that sort of person?" asks mamma, whose own father was a small attorney in a small Irish town.

"I wish I had his confounded good health," cries Clarence, coughing.

"My poor darling!" says mamma.

I said nothing. And so Elizabeth was engaged to that great broad-shouldered, red-whiskered young surgeon with the huge appetite and the dubious *h*'s! Well, why not? What was it to me? Why shouldn't she marry him? Was he not an honest man, and a fitting match for her? Yes. Very good. Only if I *do* love a bird or flower to glad me with its dark blue eye, it is the first to fade away. If I *have* a partiality for a young gazelle, it is the first to——psha! What have I to do with this namby-pamby? Can the heart that has truly loved ever forget, and doesn't it as truly love on to the——stuff! I am past the age of such follies. I might have made a woman happy: I think I should. But the fugacious years have lapsed, my Posthumus! My waist is now a good bit wider than my chest, and it is decreed that I shall be alone!

My tone, then, when next I saw Elizabeth, was sorrowful—not angry. Drencher, the young doctor, came punctually enough, you may be sure, to look after his patient. Little Pinhorn, the children's maid, led the young practitioner smiling towards the schoolroom regions. His creaking highlows sprang swiftly up the stairs. I happened to be in the hall, and surveyed

him with a grim pleasure. "Now he is in the schoolroom," I thought. "Now he is taking her hand—it is very white—and feeling her pulse. And so on, and so on. Surely, surely, Pinhorn remains in the room?" I am sitting on a hall-table as I muse plaintively on these things, and gaze up the stairs by which the Hakeem (great carroty-whiskered cad!) has passed into the sacred precincts of the harem. As I gaze up the stair, another door opens into the hall; a scowling face peeps through that door, and looks up the stair, too. 'Tis Bedford, who has slid out of his pantry, and watches the Doctor. And thou, too, my poor Bedford! Oh! the whole world throbs with vain heart-pangs, and tosses and heaves with longing unfulfilled desires! All night, and all over the world, bitter tears are dropping as regular as the dew, and cruel memories are haunting the pillow. Close my hot eyes, kind Sleep! Do not visit it, dear delusive images out of the Past! Often your figure shimmers through my dreams, Glorvina. Not as you are now, the stout mother of many children—you always had an alarming likeness to your own mother, Glorvina—but as you were—slim, black-haired, blue-eyed—when your carnation lips warbled the "Vale of Avoca" or the "Angel's Whisper." "What!" I say then, looking up the stair, "am I absolutely growing jealous of yon apothecary?—O fool!" And at this juncture, out peers Bedford's face from the pantry, and I see he is jealous too. I tie my shoe as I sit on the table; I don't affect to notice Bedford in the least (who, in fact, pops his own head back again as soon as he sees mine). I take my wideawake from the peg, set it on one side of my head, and strut whistling out of the hall-door. I stretch over Putney Heath, and my spirit resumes its tranquillity.

I sometimes keep a little journal of my proceedings, and on referring to its pages, the scene rises before me pretty clearly to which the brief notes allude. On this day I find noted:—

Friday, July 14.

"B. came down to-day. Seems to require a great deal of attendance from Dr. ——. Row between dowagers after dinner."

"B.," I need not remark, is Bessy. "Dr.," of course, you know. "Row between dowagers" means a battle royal between Mrs. Bonnington and Lady Baker, such as not unfrequently raged under the kindly Lovel's roof.

Lady Baker's gigantic menial Bulkeley condescended to wait at the family dinner at Shrublands, when perforce he had to put himself under Mr. Bedford's orders. Bedford would gladly have dispensed with the London footman, over whose calves, he said, he and his boy were always tumbling; but Lady Baker's dignity would not allow her to part from her own man; and her good-natured son-in-law allowed her, and indeed almost all other persons, to have their own way. I have reason to fear Mr. Bulkeley's morals were loose. Mrs. Bonnington had a special horror of him; his behaviour in the village public-houses, where his powder and plush were for ever visible—his freedom of conduct and conversation before the good lady's nurse and parlour-maids—provoked her anger and suspicion. More than once, she whispered to me her loathing of this flour-besprinkled monster; and, as much as such a gentle creature could, she showed her dislike to him by her behaviour. The flunkey's solemn equanimity was not to be disturbed by any such feeble indications of displeasure. From his powdered height, he looked down upon Mrs. Bonnington, and her esteem or her dislike was beneath him.

Now on this Friday night the 14th, Captain Clarence had gone to pass the day in town, and our Bessy made her appearance again, the Doctor's prescriptions having, I suppose, agreed with her. Mr. Bulkeley, who was handing coffee to the ladies, chose to offer none to Miss Prior, and I was amused when I saw Bedford's heel scrunch down on the flunkey's right foot, as he pointed towards the governess. The oaths which Bulkeley had to devour in silence must have been frightful. To do the gallant fellow justice, I think he would have died rather than speak before company in a drawing-room. He limped up and offered the refreshment to the young lady, who bowed and declined it.

"Frederick," Mrs. Bonnington begins, when the coffee ceremony is over, "now the servants are gone, I must scold you about the waste at your table, my dear. What was the need of opening that great bottle of champagne? Lady Baker only takes two glasses. Mr. Batchelor doesn't touch it." (No, thank you, my dear Mrs. Bonnington: too old a stager.) "Why not have a little bottle instead of that great, large, immense one? Bedford is a teetotaller. I suppose it is *that London footman who likes it.*"

"My dear mother, I haven't really ascertained his tastes," says Lovel.

"Then why not tell Bedford to open a pint, dear?" pursues mamma.

"Oh, Bedford—Bedford, we must not mention *him*, Mrs. Bonnington!" cries Lady Baker. "Bedford is faultless. Bedford has the keys of everything. Bedford is not to be controlled in anything. Bedford is to be at liberty to be rude to my servant."

"Bedford was admirably kind in his attendance on your daughter, Lady Baker," says Lovel, his brow darkening; "and as for your man, I should think he was big enough to protect himself from any rudeness of poor Dick!" The good fellow had been angry for one moment, at the next he was all for peace and conciliation.

Lady Baker puts on her superfine air. With that air she had often awe-stricken good simple Mrs. Bonnington; and she loved to use it whenever City folk or humble people were present. You see she thought herself your superior and mine, as *de par le monde* there are many artless Lady Bakers who do. "My dear Frederick!" says Lady B. then, putting on her best Mayfair manner, "excuse me for saying, but you don't know the—the class of servant to which Bulkeley belongs. I had him as a great favour from Lord Toddleby's. That—that class of servant is not generally accustomed to go out single."

"Unless they are two behind a carriage-perch they pine away, I suppose," remarks Mr. Lovel, "as one love-bird does without his mate."

"No doubt—no doubt," says Lady B., who does not in the least understand him; "I only say you are not accustomed here—in this kind of establishment, you understand—to that class of"——

But here Mrs. Bonnington could contain her wrath no more. "Lady Baker!" cries that injured mother, "is my son's establishment not good enough for any powdered wretch in England? Is the house of a British merchant"——

"My dear creature—my dear creature!" interposes her Ladyship, "it *is* the house of a British merchant, and a most comfortable house too."

"Yes, *as you find it*," remarks mamma.

"Yes, as I find it, when I come to take care of that *departed*

angel's children, Mrs. Bonnington,"—(Lady B. here indicates the Cecilian effigy)—"of that dear seraph's orphans, Mrs. Bonnington! *You* cannot. You have other duties—other children—a husband, whom you have left at home in delicate health, and who"——

"Lady Baker!" exclaims Mrs. Bonnington, "no one shall say I don't take care of my dear husband!"

"My dear Lady Baker!—my dear—dear mother!" cries Lovel, *éploré*, and whimpers aside to me, "They spar in this way every night, when we're alone. It's too bad, ain't it, Batch?"

"I say you *do* take care of Mr. Bonnington," Baker blandly resumes (she has hit Mrs. Bonnington on the raw place, and smilingly proceeds to thong again): "I say you *do* take care of your husband, my dear creature, and that is why you can't attend to Frederick! And as he is of a very easy temper,—except sometimes with his poor Cecilia's mother,—he allows all his tradesmen to cheat him; all his servants to cheat him; Bedford to be rude to everybody; and if to me, why not to my servant Bulkeley, with whom Lord Toddleby's groom of the chambers gave me the very highest character?"

Mrs. Bonnington in a great flurry broke in by saying she was surprised to hear that noblemen *had* grooms in their chambers: and she thought they were much better in the stables: and when they dined with Captain Huff, you know, Frederick, *his* man always brought such a dreadful smell of the stable in with him, that—— Here she paused. Baker's eye was on her; and that dowager was grinning a cruel triumph.

"He!—he! You mistake, my good Mrs. Bonnington!" says her Ladyship. "Your poor mother mistakes, my dear Frederick. You have lived in a quiet and most respectable sphere, but not, you understand, not"——

"Not what, pray, Lady Baker? We have lived in this neighbourhood twenty years: in my late husband's time, when *we saw a great deal of company*, and this dear Frederick was a boy at Westminster School. And we have *paid* for everything we have had for twenty years; and we have not owed a penny to any *tradesman*. And we may not have had *powdered footmen*, six feet high, impertinent beasts, who were rude to all the maids in the place.—Don't—I *will* speak, Frederick!—But servants who loved us, and who were *paid their wages*, and who—o—ho—ho—ho!"

Wipe your eyes, dear friends! out with all your pocket-handkerchiefs. I protest I cannot bear to see a woman in distress. Of course Fred Lovel runs to console his dear old mother, and vows Lady Baker meant no harm.

"Meant harm! My dear Frederick, what harm can I mean? I only said your poor mother did not seem to know what a groom of the chambers was! How should she?"

"Come—come," says Frederick, "enough of this! Miss Prior, will you be so kind as to give us a little music?"

Miss Prior was playing Beethoven at the piano, very solemnly and finely, when our Black Sheep returned to this quiet fold, and, I am sorry to say, in a very riotous condition. The brilliancy of his eye, the purple flush on his nose, the unsteady gait, and uncertain tone of voice, told tales of Captain Clarence, who stumbled over more than one chair before he found a seat near me.

"Quite right, old boy," says he, winking at me. "Cut again—dooshid good fellosh. Better than being along with you shtoopid-old-fogish." And he began to warble wild "Fol-de-rol-lols" in an insane accompaniment to the music.

"By heavens, this is too bad!" growls Lovel. "Lady Baker, let your big man carry your son to bed. Thank you, Miss Prior!"

At a final yell, which the unlucky young scapegrace gave, Elizabeth stopped and rose from the piano, looking very pale. She made her curtsey, and was departing, when the wretched young Captain sprang up, looked at her, and sank back on the sofa with another wild laugh. Bessy fled away scared, and white as a sheet.

"TAKE THE BRUTE TO BED!" roars the master of the house, in great wrath. And scapegrace was conducted to his apartment, whither he went laughing wildly, and calling out, "Come on, old sh-sh-shugar-baker!"

The morning after this fine exhibition, Captain Clarence Baker's mamma announced to us that her poor dear suffering boy was too ill to come to breakfast, and I believe he prescribed for himself devilled drumstick and soda-water, of which he partook in his bedroom. Lovel, seldom angry, was violently wroth with his brother-in-law; and, almost always polite, was at breakfast scarcely civil to Lady Baker. I am bound to say that female abused her position. She appealed to Cecilia's

picture a great deal too much during the course of breakfast. She hinted, she sighed, she waggled her head at me, and spoke about "that angel" in the most tragic manner. Angel is all very well; but your angel brought in *à tout propos;* your departed blessing called out of her grave ever so many times a day; when grandmamma wants to carry a point of her own; when the children are naughty, or noisy; when papa betrays a flickering inclination to dine at his Club, or to bring home a bachelor friend or two to Shrublands;—I say your angel always dragged in by the wings into the conversation loses her effect. No man's heart put on wider crape than Lovel's at Cecilia's loss. Considering the circumstances, his grief was most creditable to him: but at breakfast, at lunch, about Bulkeley the footman, about the barouche or the phaeton, or any trumpery domestic perplexity, to have a *Deus intersit* was too much. And I observed, with some inward satisfaction, that when Baker uttered her pompous funereal phrases, rolled her eyes up to the ceiling, and appealed to that quarter, the children ate their jam and quarrelled and kicked their little shins under the table, Lovel read his paper and looked at his watch to see if it was omnibus time; and Bessy made the tea, quite undisturbed by the old lady's tragical prattle.

When Baker described her son's fearful cough and dreadfully feverish state, I said, "Surely, Lady Baker, *Mr. Drencher* had better be sent for;" and I suppose I uttered the disgusting dissyllable Drencher with a fine sarcastic accent; for once, just once, Bessy's grey eyes rose through the spectacles and met mine with a glance of unutterable sadness, then calmly settled down on to the slop-basin again, or the urn, in which her pale features, of course, were odiously distorted.

"You will not bring anybody home to dinner, Frederick, in my poor boy's state?" asks Lady B.

"He may stay in his bedroom I suppose," replies Lovel.

"He is Cecilia's brother, Frederick!" cries the lady.

"Conf——" Lovel was beginning. What was he about to say?

"If you are going to confound your angel in heaven, I have nothing to say, sir!" cries the mother of Clarence.

"Parbleu, madame!" cried Lovel, in French; "if he were not my wife's brother, do you think I would let him stay here?"

"Parly Français? Oui, oui, oui!" cries Pop. "I know what pa means!"

"And so do *I* know. And I shall lend Uncle Clarence some books which Mr. Bonnington gave me, and"——

"Hold your tongue all!" shouts Lovel, with a stamp of his foot.

"You will, perhaps, have the great kindness to allow me the use of your carriage—or, at least, to wait here until my poor suffering boy can be moved, Mr. Lovel?" says Lady B., with the airs of a martyr.

Lovel rang the bell. "The carriage for Lady Baker—at her Ladyship's hour, Bedford: and the cart for her luggage. Her Ladyship and Captain Baker are going away."

"I have lost one child, Mr. Lovel, whom some people seem to forget. I am not going to murder another! I will not leave this house, sir, *unless you drive me from it by force*, until the medical man has seen my boy!" And here she and sorrow sat down again. She was always giving warning. She was always fitting the halter and traversing the cart, was Lady B., but she for ever declined to drop the handkerchief and have the business over. I saw by a little shrug in Bessy's shoulders what the governess's views were of the matter: and, in a word, Lady B. no more went away on this day, than she had done on forty previous days when she announced her intention of going. She would accept benefits, you see, but then she insulted her benefactors, and so squared accounts.

That great healthy, florid, scarlet-whiskered medical wretch came at about twelve, saw Mr. Baker, and prescribed for him: and *of course* he must have a few words with Miss Prior, and inquire into the state of her health. Just as on the previous occasion, I happened to be in the hall when Drencher went upstairs; Bedford happened to be looking out of his pantry door: I burst into a yell of laughter when I saw Dick's livid face—the sight somehow suited my savage soul.

No sooner was Medicus gone than Bessy, grave and pale, in bonnet and spectacles, came sliding downstairs. I do not mean down the banister, which was Pop's favourite method of descent; but slim, tall, noiseless, in a nunlike calm, she swept down the steps. Of course I followed her. And there was Master Bedford's nose peeping through the pantry door at us, as we went out with the children. Pray, what business of *his*

was it to be always watching anybody who walked with Miss Prior?

"So, Bessy," I said, "what report does Mr.—hem!—Mr. Drencher—give of the interesting invalid?"

"Oh, the most horrid! He says that Captain Baker has several times had a dreadful disease brought on by drinking, and that he is mad when he has it. He has delusions, sees demons, when he is in this state—wants to be watched."

"Drencher tells you everything?"

She says meekly: "He attends us when we are ill."

I remark, with fine irony: "He attends the whole family: he is always coming to Shrublands!"

"He comes very often," Miss Prior says gravely.

"And do you mean to say, Bessy," I cry, madly cutting off two or three heads of yellow broom with my stick—"do you mean to say a fellow like that, who drops his *h*'s about the room, is a welcome visitor?"

"I should be very ungrateful if he were not welcome, Mr. Batchelor," says Miss Prior. "And call me by my surname, please—and he has taken care of all my family—and"——

"And, of course, of course, of course, Miss Prior!" say I brutally; "and this is the way the world wags; and this is the way we are ill, and are cured; and we are grateful to the doctor that cures us!"

She nods her grave head. "You used to be kinder to me once, Mr. Batchelor, in old days—in your—in my time of trouble! Yes, my dear, that is a beautiful bit of broom! Oh, what a fine butterfly!" (Cecilia scours the plain after the butterfly.) "You used to be kinder to me once—when we were both unhappy."

"I was unhappy," I say, "but I survived. I was ill, but I am now pretty well, thank you. I was jilted by a false heartless woman. Do you suppose there are no other heartless women in the world?" And I am confident, if Bessy's breast had not been steel, the daggers which darted out from my eyes would have bored frightful stabs in it.

But she shook her head, and looked at me so sadly that my eye-daggers tumbled down to the ground at once; for you see, though I am a jealous Turk, I am a very easily appeased jealous Turk; and if I had been Bluebeard, and my wife, just as I was going to decapitate her, had lifted up her head from the block,

and cried a little, I should have dropped my scimitar, and said, "Come, come, Fatima, never mind for the present about that key and closet business, and I'll chop your head off some other morning." I say, Bessy disarmed me. Pooh! I say, women will make a fool of me to the end. Ah! ye gracious Fates! Cut my thread of life ere it grow too long. Suppose I were to live till seventy, and some little wretch of a woman were to set her cap at me? She would catch me—I know she would. All the males of our family have been spoony and soft, to a degree perfectly ludicrous and despicable to contemplate—— Well, Bessy Prior, putting a hand out, looked at me, and said—

"You are the oldest and best friend I have ever had, Mr. Batchelor—the only friend."

"Am I, Elizabeth?" I gasp, with a beating heart.

"Cissy is running back with a butterfly." (Our hands unlock.) "Don't you see the difficulties of my position? Don't you know that ladies are often jealous of governesses; and that unless—unless they imagined I was—I was favourable to Mr. Drencher, who is very good and kind—the ladies of Shrublands might not like my remaining alone in the house with—with—you understand?" A moment the eyes look over the spectacles: at the next, the meek bonnet bows down towards the ground.

I wonder did she hear the bump—bumping of my heart! O heart!—O wounded heart! did I ever think thou would'st bump—bump again? "Egl—Egl—izabeth," I say, choking with emotion, "do, do, do you—te—tell me—you don't—don't—don't—lo—love that apothecary?"

She shrugs her shoulder—her charming shoulder.

"And if," I hotly continue, "if a gentleman—if a man of mature age certainly, but who has a kind heart and four hundred a year of his own—were to say to you, 'Elizabeth! will you bid the flowers of a blighted life to bloom again?—Elizabeth! will you soothe a wounded heart?'——"

"Oh, Mr. Batchelor!" she sighed, and then added quickly, "Please don't take my hand. Here's Pop."

And that dear child (bless him!) came up at the moment, saying, "Oh, Miss Prior, look here! I've got such a jolly big toadstool!" And next came Cissy, with a confounded butterfly. O Richard the Third! Haven't you been maligned because you smothered two little nuisances in a Tower? What is to prove to me that you did not serve the little brutes right, and that

you weren't a most humane man? Darling Cissy coming up, then, in her dear charming way, says, "You shan't take Mr. Batchelor's hand, you shall take *my* hand!" And she tosses up her little head, and walks with the instructress of her youth.

"Ces enfants ne comprennent guère le Français," says Miss Prior, speaking very rapidly.

"Après lonche?" I whisper. The fact is, I was so agitated I hardly knew what the French for lunch was. And then our conversation dropped: and the beating of my own heart was all the sound I heard.

Lunch came. I couldn't eat a bit: I should have choked. Bessy ate plenty, and drank a glass of beer. It was her dinner, to be sure. Young *Blacksheep* did not appear. We did not miss him. When Lady Baker began to tell her story of George the Fourth at Slane Castle, I went into my own room. I took a book. Books? Psha! I went into the garden. I took out a cigar. But no, I would not smoke it. Perhaps she——many people don't like smoking.

I went into the garden. "Come into the garden, Maud." I sat by a large lilac-bush. I waited. Perhaps she would come? The morning-room windows were wide open on the lawn. Will she never come? Ah! what is that tall form advancing? gliding —gliding into the chamber like a beauteous ghost? "Who most does like an angel show, you may be sure 'tis she." She comes up to the glass. She lays her spectacles down on the mantelpiece. She puts a slim white hand over her auburn hair and looks into the mirror. Elizabeth, Elizabeth! I come!

As I came up, I saw a horrid little grinning, debauched face surge over the back of a great armchair and look towards Elizabeth. It was Captain Blacksheep, of course. He laid his elbows over the chair. He looked keenly and with a diabolical smile at the unconscious girl; and just as I reached the window, he cried out, "*Bessy Bellenden, by Jove!*"

Elizabeth turned round, gave a little cry,—and—— But what happened I shall tell in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER V.

In which I am Stung by a Serpent.

If when I heard Baker call out Bessy Bellenden, and adjure Jove, he had run forward and seized Elizabeth by the waist, or offered her other personal indignity, I too should have run forward on my side and engaged him. Though I am a stout elderly man, short in stature and in wind, I know I am a match for *that* rickety little Captain on his high-heeled boots. A match for him? I believe Miss Bessy would have been a match for both of us. Her white arm was as hard and polished as ivory. Had she held it straight pointed against the rush of the dragoon, he would have fallen backwards before his intended prey: I have no doubt he would. It was the hen, in this case, was stronger than the libertine fox, and *au besoin* would have pecked the little marauding vermin's eyes out. Had, I say, Partlet been weak, and Reynard strong, I *would* have come forward: I certainly would. Had he been a wolf now, instead of a fox, I am certain I should have run in upon him, grappled with him, torn his heart and tongue out of his black throat, and trampled the lawless brute to death.

Well, I didn't do any such thing. I was just *going* to run in —and I didn't. I was just going to rush to Bessy's side to clasp her (I have no doubt) to my heart: to beard the whiskered champion who was before her, and perhaps say, "Cheer thee—cheer thee, my persecuted maiden, my beauteous love—my Rebecca! Come on, Sir Brian de Bois Guilbert, thou dastard Templar! It is I, Sir Wilfrid of Ivanhoe." (By the way, though the fellow was not a *Templar*, he was a *Lincoln's-Inn-man*, having passed twice through the Insolvent Court there with infinite discredit.) But I made no heroic speeches. There was no need for Rebecca to jump out of window and risk her lovely neck. How could she, in fact, the French window being flush with the ground-floor? And I give you my honour, just as I was crying my war-cry, couching my lance, and rushing *à la rescousse* upon Sir Baker, a sudden thought made me drop my (figurative) point: a sudden idea made me rein in my galloping (metaphorical) steed and spare Baker for that time.

Suppose I had gone in? But for that sudden precaution, there might have been a Mrs. Batchelor. I might have been a

bullied father of ten children. (Elizabeth has a fine high temper of her own.) What is four hundred and twenty a year, with a wife and perhaps half-a-dozen children? Should I have been a whit the happier? Would Elizabeth? Ah! no. And yet I feel a certain sort of shame, even now, when I think that I didn't go in. Not that I was in a fright, as some people choose to hint. I swear I was not. But the reason why I did not charge was this——

Nay, I *did* charge part of the way, and then, I own, stopped. It was an error in judgment. It wasn't a want of courage. Lord George Sackville was a brave man, and as cool as a cucumber under fire. Well, *he* didn't charge at the battle of Minden, and Prince Ferdinand made the deuce and all of a disturbance, as we know. Byng was a brave man,—and I ask, wasn't it a confounded shame executing him? So with respect to myself. Here is my statement. I make it openly. I don't care. I am accused of seeing a woman insulted and not going to her rescue. I am not guilty, I say. That is, there were reasons which caused me not to attack. Even putting aside the superior strength of Elizabeth herself to the enemy,—I vow there were cogent and honourable reasons why I did not charge home.

You see I happened to be behind a blue lilac-bush (and was turning a rhyme—Heaven help us!—in which *death* was only to part me and Elizabeth) when I saw Baker's face surge over the chair-back. I rush forward as he cries "By Jove!" Had Miss Prior cried out on her part, the strength of twenty Heenans, I know, would have nerved this arm; but all she did was to turn pale, and say, "Oh, mercy! Captain Baker! do pity me!"

"What! you remember me, Bessy Bellenden, do you?" asks the Captain, advancing.

"Oh, not that name! please, not that name!" cries Bessy.

"I thought I knew you yesterday," says Baker. "Only, gad, you see, I had so much claret on board, I did not much know what was what. And oh! Bessy, I have got such a splitter of a headache."

"Oh! please—please, my name is Miss Prior. Pray! pray, sir, don't"——

"You've got handsomer—doosid deal handsomer. Know you now well, your spectacles off. You come in here—teach my nephew and niece, humbug my sister, make love to the sh—— Oh! you uncommon sly little toad!'

"Captain Baker, I beg—I implore you," says Bessy, or something of the sort: for the white hands assumed an attitude of supplication.

"Pooh! don't gammon *me*!" says the rickety Captain (or words to that effect), and seizes those two firm white hands in his moist trembling palms.

Now do you understand why I paused? When the dandy came grinning forward, with looks and gestures of familiar recognition: when the pale Elizabeth implored him to spare her:—a keen arrow of jealousy shot whizzing through my heart, and caused me well-nigh to fall backwards as I ran forwards. I bumped up against a bronze group in the garden. The group represented a lion stung by a serpent. *I* was a lion stung by a serpent too. Even Baker could have knocked me down. Fiends and anguish! he had known her before. The Academy, the life she had led, the wretched old tipsy ineffective guardian of a father—all these antecedents in poor Bessy's history passed through my mind. And I had offered my heart and troth to this woman! Now, my dear sir, I appeal to you. What would *you* have done? Would *you* have liked to have such a sudden suspicion thrown over the being of your affection? "Oh! spare me—spare me!" I heard her say, in clear—too clear—pathetic tones. And then there came rather a shrill "Ah!" and then the lion was up in my breast again; and I give you my honour, just as I was going to step forward—to step?—to *rush* forward from behind the urn where I had stood for a moment with thumping heart, Bessy's "Ah!" or little cry was followed by a *whack*, which I heard as clear as anything I ever heard in my life;—and I saw the little Captain spin back, topple over a chair heels up, and in this posture heard him begin to scream and curse in shrill tones. . . .

Not for long, for as the Captain and the chair tumble down, a door springs open;—a man rushes in, who pounces like a panther upon the prostrate Captain, pitches into his nose and eyes, and chokes his bad language by sending a fist down his naughty throat.

"Oh! thank you, Bedford!—please, leave him, Bedford! that's enough. There, don't hurt him any more!" says Bessy, laughing—laughing, upon my word.

"Ah! will you?" says Bedford. "Lie still, you little beggar, or I'll knock your head off. Look here, Miss Prior?—Elizabeth

—dear—dear Elizabeth! I love you with all my heart, and soul, and strength—I do."

"O Bedford! Bedford!" warbles Elizabeth.

"I do! I can't help it. I must say it! Ever since Rome, I do. Lie still, you drunken little beast! It's no use. But I adore you, O Elizabeth! Elizabeth!" And there was Dick, who was always following Miss P. about, and poking his head into keyholes to spy her, actually making love to her over the prostrate body of the Captain.

Now, what was I to do? Wasn't I in a most confoundedly awkward situation? A lady had been attacked—*a* lady?—*the* lady, and I hadn't rescued her. Her insolent enemy was overthrown, and I hadn't done it. A champion, three inches shorter than myself, had come in, and dealt the blow. I was in such a rage of mortification, that I should have liked to thrash the Captain and Bedford too. The first I know I could have matched: the second was a tough little hero. And it was he who rescued the damsel, whilst I stood by! In a strait so odious, sudden, and humiliating, what should I, what could I, what did I do?

Behind the lion and snake there is a brick wall and marble balustrade, built for no particular reason, but flanking three steps and a grassy terrace, which then rises up on a level to the house-windows. Beyond the balustrade is a shrubbery of more lilacs and so forth, by which you can walk round into another path, which also leads up to the house. So as I had not charged—ah! woe is me!—as the battle was over, I—I just went round that shrubbery into the other path, and so entered the house, arriving like Fortinbras in "Hamlet," when everybody is dead and sprawling, you know, and the whole business is done.

And was there to be no end to my shame, or to Bedford's laurels? In that brief interval, whilst I was walking round the bypath (just to give myself a pretext for entering coolly into the premises), this fortunate fellow had absolutely engaged another and larger champion. This was no other than Bulkeley, my Lady B.'s first-class attendant. When the Captain fell, amidst his screams and curses, he called for Bulkeley: and that individual made his appearance, with a little Scotch cap perched on his powdered head.

"Hullo! what's the row year?" says Goliath, entering.

"Kill that blackguard! Hang him, kill him!" screams Captain Blacksheep, rising with bleeding nose.

"I say, what's the row year?" asks the grenadier.

"Off with your cap, sir, before a lady!" calls out Bedford.

"Hoff with my cap! you be blo——"

But he said no more, for little Bedford jumped some two feet from the ground, and knocked the cap off, so that a cloud of ambrosial powder filled the room with violet odours. The immense frame of the giant shook at this insult: "I will be the death on you, you little beggar!" he grunted out; and was advancing to destroy Dick, just as I entered in the cloud which his head had raised.

"I'll knock the brains as well as the powder out of your ugly head!" says Bedford, springing at the poker. At which juncture I entered.

"What—what is this disturbance?" I say, advancing with an air of mingled surprise and resolution.

"You git out of the way till I knock his 'ead off!" roars Bulkeley.

"Take up your cap, sir, and leave the room," I say, still with the same elegant firmness.

"Put down that there poker, you coward!" bellows the monster on board wages.

"Miss Prior!" I say (like a dignified hypocrite, as I own I was), "I hope no one has offered you a rudeness!" And I glare round, first at the knight of the bleeding nose, and then at his squire.

Miss Prior's face, as she replied to me, wore a look of awful scorn.

"Thank you, sir," she said, turning her head over her shoulder and looking at me with her grey eyes. "Thank you, Richard Bedford! God bless you! I shall ever be thankful to you, wherever I am." And the stately figure swept out of the room.

She had seen me behind that confounded statue, then, and I had not come to her! O torments and racks! O scorpions, fiends, and pitchforks! The face of Bedford, too (flashing with knightly gratitude anon as she spoke kind words to him and passed on), wore a look of scorn as he turned towards me, and then stood, his nostrils distended and breathing somewhat hard, glaring at his enemies, and still grasping his mace of battle.

When Elizabeth was gone, there was a pause of a moment,

and then Blacksheep, taking his bleeding cambric from his nose, shrieks out, "Kill him, I say! A fellow that dares to hit one in my condition, and when I'm down! Bulkeley, you great hulking jackass! kill him, I say!"

"Jest let him put that there poker down, that's hall," growls Bulkeley.

"You're afraid, you great cowardly beast! You shall go, Mr. What-d'ye-call-'im—Mr. Bedford—you shall have the sack, sir, as sure as your name is what it is! I'll tell my brother-in-law everything; and as for that woman"——

"If you say a word against her, I'll cane you wherever I see you, Captain Baker!" I cry out.

"Who spoke to *you?*" says the Captain, falling back and scowling at me.

"Who hever told you to put *your* foot in?" says the squire.

I was in such a rage, and so eager to find an object on which I might wreak my fury, that I confess I plunged at this Bulkeley. I gave him two most violent blows on the waistcoat, which caused him to double up with such frightful contortions, that Bedford burst out laughing; and even the Captain with the damaged eye and nose began to laugh too. Then, taking a lesson from Dick, as there was a fine shining dagger on the table, used for the cutting open of reviews and magazines, I seized and brandished this weapon, and I dare say would have sheathed it in the giant's bloated corpus, had he made any movement towards me. But he only called out, "hI'll be the death on you, you cowards! hI'll be the death of both on you!" and snatching up his cap from the carpet, walked out of the room.

"Glad you did that, though," says Baker, nodding his head. "Think I'd best pack up."

And now the Devil of Rage which had been swelling within me gave place to a worse devil—the Devil of Jealousy—and I turned on the Captain, who was also just about to slink away.

"Stop!" I cried out—I screamed out, I may say.

"Who spoke to you, I should like to know? and who the dooce dares to speak to me in that sort of way?" says Clarence Baker, with a plentiful garnish of expletives, which need not be here inserted. But he stopped, nevertheless, and turned slouching round.

"You spoke just now of Miss Prior?" I said. "Have you anything against her?"

"What's that to you?" he asked.

"I am her oldest friend. I introduced her into this family. *Dare* you say a word against her?"

"Well, who the dooce has?"

"You knew her before?"

"Yes, I did, then."

"When she went by the name of Bellenden?"

"Of course I did. And what's that to you?" he screams out.

"I this day asked her to be my wife, sir! *That's* what it is to me!" I replied with severe dignity.

Mr. Clarence began to whistle. "Oh! if that's it—of course not!" he says.

The jealous demon writhed within me and rent me.

"You mean that there *is* something, then?" I asked, glaring at the young reprobate.

"No, I don't," says he, looking very much frightened. "No, there is nothin'. Upon my sacred honour, there isn't, that I know." (I was looking uncommonly fierce at this time, and, I must own, would rather have quarrelled with somebody than not.) "No, there is nothin' that I know. Ever so many years ago, you see, I used to go with Tom Papillion, Turkington, and two or three fellows, to that theatre. Dolphin had it. And we used to go behind the scenes—and—and I own I had a row with her. And I was in the wrong. There now, I own I was. And she left the theatre. And she behaved quite right. And I was very sorry. And I believe she is as good a woman as ever stept now. And the father was a disreputable old man, but most honourable—I know he was. And there was a fellow in the Bombay service—a fellow by the name of Walker or Walkingham—yes, Walkingham; and I used to meet him at the 'Cave of Harmony,' you know; and he told me that she was as right as right could be. And he was doosidly cut up about leaving her. And he would have married her, I dessay, only for his father the General, who wouldn't stand it. And he was ready to hang himself when he went away. He used to drink awfully, and then he used to swear about her; and we used to chaff him, you know. Low vulgarish sort of man, he was; and a very passionate fellow. And if you're goin' to marry her, you know—of course, I ask your pardon, and that; and upon the honour of a gentleman I know nothin' against her. And I wish

you joy and all that sort of thing. I do now, really now!" And so saying, the mean mischievous little monkey sneaked away, and clambered up to his own perch in his own bedroom.

Worthy Mrs. Bonnington, with a couple of her young ones, made her appearance at this juncture. She had a key, which gave her a free pass through the garden door, and brought her children for an afternoon's play and fighting with their little nephew and niece. Decidedly, Bessy did not bring up her young folks well. Was it that their grandmothers spoiled them, and undid the governess's work? Were those young people odious (as they often were) by nature, or rendered so by the neglect of their guardians? If Bessy had loved her charges more, would they not have been better? Had she a kind, loving, maternal heart? Ha! This thought, this jealous doubt, smote my bosom: and were she mine, and the mother of many possible little Batchelors, would she be kind to *them?* Would they be wilful, and selfish, and abominable little wretches, in a word, like these children? Nay—nay! Say that Elizabeth has but a cold heart; we cannot be all perfection. But, *per contra*, you must admit that, cold as she is, she does her duty. How good she has been to her own brothers and sisters: how cheerfully she has given away her savings to them: how admirably she has behaved to her mother, hiding the iniquities of that disreputable old schemer, and covering her improprieties with decent filial screens and pretexts. Her mother? *Ah! grands dieux!* You want to marry, Charles Batchelor, and you will have that greedy pauper for a mother-in-law; that fluffy Blue-coat boy, those hobnailed taw-players, top-spinners, toffee-eaters, those underbred girls, for your brothers and sisters-in-law! They will be quartered upon you. You are so absurdly weak and good-natured—you know you are—that you will never be able to resist. Those boys will grow up; they will go out as clerks or shop-boys; get into debt and expect you to pay their bills: want to be articled to attorneys and so forth, and call upon you for the premium. Their mother will never be out of your house. She will ferret about in your drawers and wardrobes, filch your haberdashery, and cast greedy eyes on the very shirts and coats on your back, and calculate when she can get them for her boys. Those vulgar young miscreants will never fail to come and dine with you on a Sunday. They will bring their young linendraper or articled friends. They will draw bills

on you, or give their own to money-lenders, and unless you take up those bills they will consider you a callous avaricious brute, and the heartless author of their ruin. The girls will come and practise on your wife's piano. *They* won't come to you on Sundays only; they will always be staying in the house. They will always be preventing a *tête-à-tête* between your wife and you. As they grow old, they will want her to take them out to tea-parties, and to give such entertainments, where they will introduce their odious young men. They will expect you to commit meannesses, in order to get theatre tickets for them from the newspaper editors of your acquaintance. You will have to sit in the back seat; to pay the cab to and from the play: to see glances and bows of recognition passing between them and dubious bucks in the lobbies: and to lend the girls your wife's gloves, scarfs, ornaments, smelling-bottles, and handkerchiefs, which of course they will never return. If Elizabeth is ailing from any circumstance, they will get a footing in your house, and she will be jealous of them. The ladies of your own family will quarrel with them of course; and very likely your mother-in-law will tell them a piece of her mind. And you bring this dreary certainty upon you, because, forsooth, you fall in love with a fine figure, a pair of grey eyes, and a head of auburn (not to say red) hair! O Charles Batchelor! in what a galley hast thou seated thyself, and what a family is crowded in thy boat!

All these thoughts are passing in my mind, as good Mrs. Bonnington is prattling to me—I protest I don't know about what. I think I caught some faint sentences about the Patagonian mission, the National schools, and Mr. Bonnington's lumbago; but I can't say for certain. I was busy with my own thoughts. I had asked the awful question—I was not answered. Bessy had even gone away in a huff about my want of gallantry, but I was easy on that score. As for Mr. Drencher, she had told me her sentiments regarding him; "and though I am considerably older, yet," thought I, "I need not be afraid of *that* rival. But when she says *yes?* Oh dear! oh dear! *Yes* means Elizabeth—certainly, a brave young woman—but it means Mrs. Prior, and Gus, and Amelia Jane, and the whole of that dismal family." No wonder, with these dark thoughts crowding my mind, Mrs. Bonnington found me absent; and, as a comment upon some absurd reply of mine, said, "La! Mr. Batchelor, you must be crossed in love!"

Crossed in love! It might be as well for some folks if they *were* crossed in love! At my age, and having loved madly, as I did, that party in Dublin, a man doesn't take the second fit by any means so strongly. Well! well! the die was cast, and I was there to bide the hazard. What can be the matter? I look pale and unwell, and had better see Mr. D. Thank you, my dear Mrs. Bonnington. I had a violent—a violent toothache last night—yes, toothache; and was kept awake, thank you. And there's nothing like having it out? and Mr. D. draws them beautifully, and has taken out six of your children's? It's better now; I dare say it will be better still, soon. I retire to my chamber: I take a book—can't read one word of it. I resume my tragedy. Tragedy? Bosh!

I suppose Mr. Drencher thought his yesterday's patient would be better for a little more advice and medicine, for he must pay a second visit to Shrublands on this day, just after the row with the Captain had taken place, and walked up to the upper regions, as his custom was. Very likely he found Mr. Clarence bathing his nose there, and prescribed for the injured organ. Certainly he knocked at the door of Miss Prior's schoolroom (the fellow was always finding a pretext for entering *that* apartment), and Master Bedford comes to me with a woebegone livid countenance, and a "Ha! ha! young Sawbones is up with her!"

"So, my poor Dick," I say, "I heard your confession as I was myself running in to rescue Miss P. from that villain."

"My blood was hup," groans Dick,—"up, I beg your pardon. When I saw that young rascal lay a hand on her, I could not help flying at him. I would have hit him if he had been my own father. And I could not help saying what was on my mind. It would come out; I knew it would some day. I might as well wish for the moon as hope to get her. She thinks herself superior to me, and perhaps she is mistaken. But it's no use; she don't care for me; she don't care for anybody. Now the words are out, in course I mustn't stay here."

"You may get another place easily enough with your character, Bedford!"

But he shook his head. "I'm not disposed to black nobody else's boots no more. I have another place. I have saved a bit of money. My poor old mother is gone, whom you used to be so kind to, Mr. B. I'm alone now. Confound that Saw-

bones, will he *never* come away? I'll tell you about my plans some day, sir, and I know you'll be so good as to help me." And away goes Dick, looking the picture of woe and despair.

Presently, from the upper rooms, Sawbones descends. I happened to be standing in the hall, you see, talking to Dick. Mr. Drencher scowls at me fiercely, and I suppose I return him haughty glance for glance. He hated me: I him: I liked him to hate me.

"How is your patient, Mr.—a—Drencher?" I ask.

"'Trifling contusion of the nose—brown paper and vinegar," says the Doctor.

"Great powers! did the villain strike her on the nose?" I cry in terror.

"*Her*—whom?" says he.

"Oh—ah—yes—indeed; it's nothing," I say, smiling. The fact is I had forgotten about Baker in my natural anxiety for Elizabeth.

"I don't know what you mean by laughing, sir," says the red-haired practitioner. "But if you mean chaff, Mr. Batchelor, let me tell you I don't wan't chaff, and I won't have chaff!" And herewith exit Sawbones, looking black doses at me.

Jealous of me, think I, as I sink down in a chair in the morning-room, where the combat had just taken place. And so thou, too, art fever-caught, my poor physician! What a fascination this girl has! Here's the butler: here's the medical man: here am I: here is the Captain has been smitten—smitten on the nose. Has the gardener been smitten too, and is the page gnawing his buttons off for jealousy, and is Monsieur Bulkeley equally in love with her? I take up a review, and think over this, as I glance through its pages.

As I am lounging and reading, Monsieur Bulkeley himself makes his appearance, bearing in cloaks and packages belonging to his lady. "Have the goodness to take that cap off," I say coolly.

"*You* 'ave the goodness to remember that if hever I see you hout o' this 'ouse I'll punch your hugly 'ead off," says the monstrous menial. But I poise my paper-cutter, and he retires growling.

From despondency I pass to hope; and the prospect of marriage, which before appeared so dark to me, assumes a gayer hue. I have four hundred a year, and that house in

Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury Square, of which the upper part will be quite big enough for us. If we have children, there is Queen Square for them to walk and play in. Several genteel families I know, who still live in the neighbourhood, will come and see my wife, and we shall have a comfortable cosy little society, suited to our small means. The tradesmen in Lamb's Conduit Street are excellent, and the music at the Foundling always charming. I shall give up one of my Clubs. The other is within an easy walk.

No: my wife's relations will *not* plague me. Bessy is a most sensible determined woman, and as cool a hand as I know. She will only see Mrs. Prior at proper (and, I trust, distant) intervals. Her brothers and sisters will learn to know their places, and not obtrude upon me or the company which I keep. My friends, who are educated people and gentlemen, will not object to visit me because I live over a shop (my ground-floor and spacious back premises in Devonshire Street are let to a German toy-warehouse). I shall add a hundred or two at least to my income by my literary labour; and Bessy, who has practised frugality all her life, and been a good daughter and a good sister, I know will prove a good wife, and, please Heaven! a good mother. Why, four hundred a year *plus* two hundred, is a nice little income. And my old College friend, Wigmore, who is just on the Bench? He will, he must get me a place—say three hundred a year. With nine hundred a year we can do quite well.

Love is full of elations and despondencies. The future, over which such a black cloud of doubt lowered a few minutes since, blushed a sweet rose-colour now. I saw myself happy, beloved, with a competence, and imagined myself reposing in the delightful garden of Red Lion Square on some summer evening, and half-a-dozen little Batchelors frisking over the flower-bespangled grass there.

After our little colloquy, Mrs. Bonnington not finding much pleasure in my sulky society, had gone to Miss Prior's room with her young folks, and as the door of the morning-room opened now and again, I could hear the dear young ones scuttling about the passages, where they were playing at horses and fighting and so forth. After a while good Mrs. B. came down from the schoolroom. "Whatever has happened, Mr. Batchelor?" she said to me, in her passage through the morning-

room. "Miss Prior is very pale and absent. *You* are very pale and absent. Have you been courting her, you naughty man, and trying to supplant Mr. Drencher? There now, you turn as red as my ribbon! Ah! Bessy is a good girl, and *so* fond of my dear children. 'Ah, dear Mrs. Bonnington,' she says to me—but of course you won't tell Lady B.: it would make Lady B. perfectly furious. 'Ah!' says Miss P. to me, 'I wish, ma'am, that my little charges were like their dear little uncles and aunts—so exquisitely brought up!' Pop again wished to beat his uncle. I wish—I wish Frederick would send that child to school! Miss P. owns that he is too much for her. Come, children, it is time to go to dinner." And, with more of this prattle, the good lady summons her young ones, who descend from the schoolroom with their nephew and niece.

Following nephew and niece, comes demure Miss Prior, to whom I fling a knowing glance, which says, plain as eyes can speak—Do, Elizabeth, come and talk for a little to your faithful Batchelor! She gives a sidelong look of intelligence, leaves a parasol and a pair of gloves on a table, accompanies Mrs. Bonnington and the young ones into the garden, sees the clergyman's wife and children disappear through the garden gate, and her own youthful charges engaged in the strawberry-beds; and, of course, returns to the morning-room for her parasol and gloves, which she had forgotten. There is a calmness about that woman—an easy dauntless dexterity, which frightens me—*ma parole d'honneur*. In that white breast is there a white marble stone in place of the ordinary cordial apparatus? Under the white velvet glove of that cool hand are there bones of cold steel?

"So, Drencher has again been here, Elizabeth?" I say.

She shrugs her shoulders. "To see that wretched Captain Baker. The horrid little man will die! He was not actually sober just now when he—when I—when you saw him. How I wish you had come sooner—to prevent that horrible, tipsy, disreputable quarrel! It makes me very very thoughtful, Mr. Batchelor. He will speak to his mother—to Mr. Lovel. I shall have to go away. I know I must."

"And don't you know where you can find a home, Elizabeth? Have the words I spoke this morning been so soon forgotten?"

"Oh! Mr. Batchelor! you spoke in a heat. You could not

think seriously of a poor girl like me, so friendless and poor, with so many family ties. Pop is looking this way, please. To a man bred like you, what can I be?"

"You may make the rest of my life happy, Elizabeth!" I cry. "We are friends of such old—old date, that you know what my disposition is."

"Oh! indeed," says she, "it is certain that there never was a sweeter disposition or a more gentle creature." (Somehow I thought she said the words "gentle creature" with rather a sarcastic tone of voice.) "But consider your habits, dear sir. I remember how in Beak Street you used to be always giving, and, in spite of your income, always poor. You love ease and elegance; and having, I dare say, not too much for yourself now, would you encumber yourself with—with me and the expenses of a household? I shall always regard you, esteem you, love you as the best friend I ever had, and—*voici venir la mère du vaurien.*"

Enter Lady Baker. "Do I interrupt a *tête-à-tête*, pray?" she asks.

"My benefactor has known me since I was a child, and befriended me since then," says Elizabeth, with simple kindness beaming in her look. "We were just speaking—I was just—ah!—telling him that my uncle has invited me most kindly to Saint Boniface, whenever I can be spared; and if you and the family go to the Isle of Wight this autumn, perhaps you will intercede with Mr. Lovel, and let me have a little holiday. Mary will take every charge of the children, and I do so long to see my dear aunt and cousins! And I was begging Mr. Batchelor to use his interest with you, and to entreat you to use *your* interest to get me leave. That was what our talk was about."

The deuce it was! I couldn't say No, of course; but I protest I had no idea until that moment that our conversation had been about Aunt and Uncle at Saint Boniface. Again came the horrible suspicion, the dreadful doubt—the chill as of a cold serpent crawling down my back—which had made me pause, and gasp, and turn pale, anon when Bessy and Captain Clarence were holding colloquy together. What *has* happened in this woman's life? *Do* I know all about her, or anything; or only just as much as she chooses? O Batch—Batch! I suspect you are no better than an old gaby!

"And Mr. Drencher has just been here and seen your son," Bessie continues softly; "and he begs and entreats your Ladyship to order Captain Baker to be more prudent. Mr. D. says Captain Baker is shortening his life, indeed he is, by his carelessness."

There is Mr. Lovel coming from the City, and the children are running to their papa! And Miss Prior makes her patroness a meek curtsey, and demurely slides away from the room. With a sick heart I say to myself, "She has been—yes—humbugging is the word—humbugging Lady B. Elizabeth! Elizabeth! can it be possible thou art humbugging *me* too?"

Before Lovel enters, Bedford rapidly flits through the room. He looks as pale as a ghost. His face is awfully gloomy.

"Here's the governor come," Dick whispers to me. "It must all come hout now—out, I beg your pardon. So she's caught *you*, has she? I thought she would." And he grins a ghastly grin.

"What do you mean?" I ask, and I dare say turn rather red.

"I know all about it. I'll speak to you to-night, sir. Confound her! confound her!" and he doubles his knuckles into his eyes, and rushes out of the room over Buttons entering with the afternoon tea.

"What on earth's the matter, and why are you knocking the things about?" Lovel asks at dinner of his butler, who, indeed, acted as one distraught. A savage gloom was depicted on Bedford's usually melancholy countenance, and the blunders in his service were many. With his brother-in-law Lovel did not exchange many words. Clarence was not yet forgiven for his escapade two days previous. And when Lady Baker cried, "Mercy, child! what have you done to yourself?" and the Captain replied, "Knocked my face against a dark door—made my nose bleed," Lovel did not look up or express a word of sympathy. "If the fellow knocked his worthless head off, I should not be sorry," the widower murmured to me. Indeed, the tone of the Captain's voice, his *ton*, and his manners in general, were especially odious to Mr. Lovel, who could put up with the tyranny of women, but revolted against the vulgarity and assumption of certain men.

As yet nothing had been said about the morning's quarrel. Here we were all sitting with a sword hanging over our heads, smiling and chatting, and talking cookery, politics, the weather,

and what not. Bessy was perfectly cool and dignified at tea. Danger or doubt did not seem to affect *her*. If she had been ordered for execution at the end of the evening she would have made the tea, played her Beethoven, answered questions in her usual voice, and glided about from one to another with her usual dignified calm, until the hour of decapitation came, when she would have made her curtsey, and gone out and had the amputation performed quite quietly and neatly. I admired her, I was frightened before her. The cold snake crept more than ever down my back as I meditated on her. I made such awful blunders at whist that even good Mrs. Bonnington lost her temper with her fourteen shillings. Miss Prior would have played her hand out, and never made a fault, you may be sure. She retired at her accustomed hour. Mrs. Bonnington had her glass of negus, and withdrew too. Lovel keeping his eyes sternly on the Captain, that officer could only get a little sherry and seltzer, and went to bed sober. Lady Baker folded Lovel in her arms, a process to which my poor friend very humbly submitted. Everybody went to bed, and no tales were told of the morning's doings. There was a respite, and no execution could take place till to-morrow at any rate. Put on thy night-cap, Damocles, and slumber for to-night at least. Thy slumbers will not be cut short by the awful Chopper of Fate.

Perhaps you may ask what need had *I* to be alarmed? Nothing could happen to me. I was not going to lose a governess's place. Well, if I must tell the truth, I had not acted with entire candour in the matter of Bessy's appointment. In recommending her to Lovel and the late Mrs. L., I had answered for her probity, and so forth, with all my might. I had described the respectability of her family, her father's campaigns, her grandfather's (old Doctor Sargent's) celebrated sermons; and had enlarged with the utmost eloquence upon the learning and high character of her uncle, the Master of Boniface, and the deserved regard he bore his niece. But that part of Bessy's biography which related to the Academy I own I had not touched upon. *A quoi bon?* Would every gentleman or lady like to have everything told about him or her? I had kept the Academy dark then; and so had brave Dick Bedford the butler; and should that miscreant Captain reveal the secret, I knew there would be an awful commotion in the building. I should have to incur Lovel's not unjust reproaches for *suppressio*

veri, and the anger of those two *viragines*, the grandmothers of Lovel's children. I was more afraid of the women than of him, though conscience whispered me that I had not acted quite rightly by my friend.

When, then, the bed-candles were lighted, and every one said good-night, "Oh! Captain Baker," say I gaily, and putting on a confoundedly hypocritical grin, "if you will come into my room, I will give you that book."

"What book?" says Baker.

"The book we were talking of this morning."

"Hang me, if I know what you mean," says he. And luckily for me, Lovel, giving a shrug of disgust, and a good-night to me, stalked out of the room, bed-candle in hand. No doubt, he thought his wretch of a brother-in-law did not well remember after dinner what he had done or said in the morning.

As I now had the Blacksheep to myself, I said calmly, "You are quite right. There was no talk about a book at all, Captain Baker. But I wished to see you alone, and impress upon you my earnest wish that everything which occurred this morning—mind, *everything*—should be considered as strictly private, and should be confided to *no person whatever*—you understand?—to no person."

"Confound me," Baker breaks out, "if I understand what you mean by your books and your 'strictly private.' I shall speak what I choose—hang me!"

"In that case, sir," I said, "will you have the goodness to send a friend of yours to my friend Captain Fitzboodle? I must consider the matter as personal between ourselves. You insulted—and, as I find now, for the second time—a lady whose relations to me you know. You have given neither to her, nor to me, the apology to which we are both entitled. You refuse even to promise to be silent regarding a painful scene which was occasioned by your own brutal and cowardly behaviour; and you must abide by the consequences, sir! you must abide by the consequences!" And I glared at him over my flat candlestick.

"Curse me!—and hang me!—and," &c. &c. &c., he says, "if I know what all this is about. What the dooce do you talk to *me* about books, and about silence, and apologies, and sending Captain Fitzboodle to me? *I* don't want to see Captain Fitzboodle—great fat brute! *I* know him perfectly well."

"Hush!" say I, "here's Bedford." In fact, Dick appeared at this juncture, to close the house and put the lamps out.

But Captain Clarence only spoke or screamed louder. "What do I care about who hears me? That fellow insulted me already to-day, and I'd have pitched his life out of, him, only I was down, and I'm so confounded weak and nervous, and just out of my fever—and—and hang it all! what are you driving at, Mr. What's-your-name?" And the wretched little creature cries almost as he speaks.

"Once for all, will you agree that the affair about which we spoke shall go no further?" I say, as stern as Draco.

"I shan't say anythin' about it. I wish you'd leave me alone, you fellows, and not come botherin'. I wish I could get a glass of brandy-and-water up in my bedroom. I tell you I can't sleep without it," whimpers the wretch.

"Sorry I laid hands on you, sir," says Bedford sadly. "It wasn't worth the while. Go to bed, and I'll get you something warm."

"Will you, though? I couldn't sleep without it. Do now—do now! and I won't say anythin'—I won't now—on the honour of a gentleman, I won't. Good-night, Mr. What-d'ye-call." And Bedford leads the helot to his chamber.

"I've got him in bed; and I've given him a dose; and I put some laudanum in it. He ain't been out. He has not had much to-day," says Bedford, coming back to my room, with his face ominously pale.

"You have given him laudanum?" I ask.

"*Sawbones* gave him some yesterday,—told me to give him a little—forty drops," growls Bedford.

Then the gloomy major-domo puts a hand into each waistcoat pocket, and looks at me. "You want to fight for her, do you, sir? Calling out, and that sort of game? Phoo!" and he laughs scornfully.

"The little miscreant is too despicable, I own," say I, "and it's absurd for a peaceable fellow like me to talk about powder and shot at this time of day. But what could I do?"

"I say it's SHE ain't worth it," says Bedford, lifting up both clenched fists out of the waistcoat pockets.

"What do you mean, Dick?" I ask.

"She's humbugging you—she's humbugging me,—she's humbugging everybody," roars Dick. "Look here, sir!" and

out of one of the clenched fists he flings a paper down on the table.

"What is it?" I ask. It's her handwriting. I see the neat trim lines on the paper.

"It's not to you; nor yet to me," says Bedford.

"Then how dare you read it, sir?" I ask, all of a tremble.

"It's to him. It's to Sawbones," hisses out Bedford. "Sawbones dropt it as he was getting into his gig; and I read it. *I* ain't going to make no bones about whether it's wrote to me or not. She tells him how you asked her to marry you." ("Ha!") "That's how I came to know it. And do you know what she calls you, and what *he* calls you,—that castor-hoil beast? And do you know what she says of you? That you hadn't pluck to stand by her to-day. There,—it's all down under her hand and seal. You may read it, or not, if you like. And if poppy or mandragora will medicine you to sleep afterwards, I just recommend you to take it. *I* shall go and get a drop out of the Captain's bottle—I shall."

And he leaves me, and the fatal paper on the table.

Now, suppose you had been in my case—would you, or would you not, have read the paper? Suppose there is some news—bad news—about the woman you love, will you, or will you not, hear it? Was Othello a rogue because he let Iago speak to him? There was the paper. It lay there glimmering under the light, with all the house quiet.

CHAPTER VI.

Cecilia's Successor.

MONSIEUR ET HONORÉ LECTEUR! I see, as perfectly as if you were sitting opposite to me, the scorn depicted on your noble countenance when you read my confession that I, Charles Batchelor, Esquire, did burglariously enter the premises of Edward Drencher, Esquire, M.R.C.S.I. (phew! the odious pestle-grinder, I never could bear him!), and break open, and read a certain letter his property. I may have been wrong, but I am candid. I tell my misdeeds; some fellows hold their tongues. Besides, my good man, consider the temptation, and

the horrid insight into the paper which Bedford's report had already given me. Would *you* like to be told that the girl of your heart was playing fast and loose with it, had none of her own, or had given hers to another? I don't want to make a Mrs. Robin Gray of any woman, and merely because "her mither presses her sair" to marry against her will. "If Miss Prior," thought I, "prefers this lint-scraper to me, ought I to balk her? He is younger, and stronger, certainly, than myself. Some people may consider him handsome. (By the way, what a remarkable thing it is about many women, that, in affairs of the heart, they don't seem to care or understand whether a man is a gentleman or not.) It may be it is my superior fortune and social station which may induce Elizabeth to waver in her choice between me and my bleeding, bolusing, tooth-drawing rival. If so, and I am only taken from mercenary considerations, what a pretty chance of subsequent happiness does either of us stand! Take the vaccinator, girl, if thou preferrest him! I know what it is to be crossed in love already. It's hard, but I can bear it! I ought to know, I must know, I *will* know what is in that paper!" So saying, as I pace round and round the table where the letter lies flickering white under the midnight taper, I stretch out my hand—I seize the paper—I——well, I own it—there—yes—I took it and I read it.

Or, rather, I may say, I read that part of IT which the bleeder and blisterer had flung down. It was but a fragment of a letter —a fragment—oh! how bitter to swallow? A lump of Epsom salt could not have been more disgusting. It appeared (from Bedford's statement) that Æsculapius, on getting into his gig, had allowed this scrap of paper to whisk out of his pocket—the rest he read, no doubt, under the eyes of the writer. Very likely, during the perusal, he had taken and squeezed the false hand which wrote the lines. Very likely the first part of the *precious document* contained compliments to him—from the horrible context I judged so—compliments to that vendor of leeches and bandages, into whose heart I dare say I wished ten thousand lancets might be stuck, as I perused the FALSE ONE'S wheedling address to him! So ran the document. How well every word of it was engraved on my anguished heart! If page *three*, which I suppose was about the bit of the letter which I got, was as it was—what must pages *one* and *two* have been? The dreadful document began, then, thus:—

"——dear hair in the locket, which I shall *ever* wear for the sake of *him who gave it*"—(dear hair! indeed—disgusting carrots! She should have been ashamed to call it "dear hair")—"for the sake of him who gave it and whose *bad temper* I shall pardon, because I think in spite of his faults he is a *little fond* of his poor Lizzie! Ah, Edward! how *could* you go on so the last time about poor Mr. B.! Can you imagine that I can ever have more than a filial regard for the kind old gentleman?" (*Il était question de moi, ma parole d'honneur.* I was the kind old gentleman!) "I have known him since my childhood. He was intimate in our family in earlier and happier days; made our house his home: and, I must say, was most kind to all of us children. If he has vanities, you naughty boy, is he the only one of his sex who is vain? Can you fancy that such an old creature (an *old muff*, as you call him, you wicked satirical man) could ever make an impression on my heart? No, sir!" (Aha! so I was an old muff, was I?) "Though I don't wish to make *you* vain too, or that other people should laugh at you, as you do at poor dear Mr. B., I think, sir, you need but look *in your glass* to see that you need not be afraid of such a rival as *that*. You fancy he is attentive to me? If you looked only a little angrily at him, he would fly back to London. To-day, when your *horrid little patient* did presume to offer to take my hand, when I boxed his little wicked ears and sent him *spinning* to the end of the room—poor Mr. Batch was so *frightened* that he did not *dare* to come into the room, and I saw him peeping behind a statue on the lawn, and he would not come in until the *servants arrived*. Poor man! We cannot all of us have courage like *a certain Edward*, who I know is as *bold as a lion*. Now, sir, you must not be quarrelling with that wretched little Captain for being rude. I have shown him that I can very well *take care of myself*. I knew the *odious thing* the first moment I set eyes on him, though he had forgotten me. Years ago I met him, and I remember he was equally *rude* and *tips*——"

Here the letter was torn. Beyond "*tips*" it did not go. But that was enough, wasn't it? To this woman I had offered a gentle and manly, I may say a kind and tender heart—I had offered four hundred a year in funded property, besides my house in Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury—and she preferred *Edward*, forsooth, at the sign of the Gallipot: and may ten thousand pestles smash his brains!

You may fancy what a night I had after reading that scrap. I promise you I did not sleep much. I heard the hours toll as I kept vigil. I lay amidst shattered capitals, broken shafts of the tumbled palace which I had built in imagination—oh! how bright and stately! I sat amongst the ruins of my own happiness, surrounded by the murdered corpses of innocent-visioned domestic joys. Tick—tock! Moment after moment I heard on the clock the clinking footsteps of wakeful grief. I fell into a doze towards morning, and dreamed that I was dancing with Glorvina, when I woke with a start, finding Bedford arrived

with my shaving-water and opening the shutters. When he saw my haggard face he wagged his head.

"You *have* read it, I see, sir," says he.

"Yes, Dick," groaned I out of bed, "I have swallowed it." And I laughed I may say a fiendish laugh. "And now I have taken it, not poppy nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy syrups in his shop (hang him!) will be able to medicine me to sleep for some time to come!"

"She has no heart, sir. I don't think she cares for t'other chap much," groans the gloomy butler. "She can't, after having known *us*"—and my companion in grief, laying down my hot-water jug, retreats.

I did not cut any part of myself with my razor. I shaved quite calmly. I went to the family at breakfast. My impression is I was sarcastic and witty. I smiled most kindly at Miss Prior when she came in. Nobody could have seen from my outward behaviour that anything was wrong within. I was an apple. Could you inspect the worm at my core? No, no. Somebody, I think old Baker, complimented me on my good looks. I was a smiling lake. Could you see on my placid surface, amongst my sheeny water-lilies, that a corpse was lying under my cool depths? "A bit of devilled chicken?" "No, thank you. By the way, Lovel, I think I must go to town to-day." "You'll come back to dinner, of course?" "Well—no." "Oh, stuff! You promised me to-day and to-morrow. Robinson, Brown, and Jones are coming to-morrow, and you must be here to meet them." Thus we prattle on. I answer, I smile, I say, "Yes, if you please, another cup," or, "Be so good as to hand the muffin," or what not. But I am dead. I feel as if I am under ground, and buried. Life, and tea, and clatter, and muffins are going on, of course; and daisies spring and the sun shines on the grass whilst I am under it. Ah, dear me! it's very cruel: it's very very lonely: it's very odd! I don't belong to the world any more. I have done with it. I am shelved away. But my spirit returns and flitters through the world, which it has no longer anything to do with: and my ghost, as it were, comes and smiles at my own tombstone. Here lies Charles Batchelor, the Unloved One. Oh! alone, alone, alone! Why, Fate! didst thou ordain that I should be companionless? Tell me where the Wandering Jew is, that I may go and sit with him. Is there any place at a

lighthouse vacant? Who knows where is the island of Juan Fernandez? Engage me a ship and take me there at once. Mr. R. Crusoe, I think? My dear Robinson, have the kindness to hand me over your goatskin cap, breeches, and umbrella. Go home, and leave *me* here. Would you know who is the solitariest man on earth? That man am I. Was that cutlet which I ate at breakfast anon, was that lamb which frisked on the mead last week (beyond yon wall where the unconscious cucumber lay basking which was to form his sauce)—I say was that lamb made so tender that I might eat him? And my heart, then? Poor heart! wert thou so softly constituted only that women might stab thee? So I am a Muff, am I? And she will always wear a lock of his "dear hair," will she? Ha! ha! The men on the omnibus looked askance as they saw me laugh. They thought it was from Hanwell, not Putney, I was escaping. Escape? Who can escape? I went into London. I went to the Clubs. Jawkins, of course, was there; and my impression is that he talked as usual. I took another omnibus, and went back to Putney. "I will go back and revisit my grave," I thought. It is said that ghosts loiter about their former haunts a good deal when they are first dead; flit wistfully among their old friends and companions, and, I dare say, expect to hear a plenty of conversation and friendly tearful remark about themselves. But suppose they return, and find nobody talking of them at all? Or suppose, Hamlet (Père, and Royal Dane) comes back and finds Claudius and Gertrude very comfortable over a piece of cold meat, or what not? Is the late gentleman's present position as a ghost a very pleasant one? Crow, Cocks! Quick, Sundawn! Open, Trap-door! *Allons:* it's best to pop underground again. So I am a Muff, am I? What a curious thing that walk up the hill to the house was! What a different place Shrublands was yesterday to what it is to-day! Has the sun lost its light, and the flowers their bloom, and the joke its sparkle, and the dish its savour? Why, bless my soul! what is Lizzie herself—only an ordinary woman—freckled certainly—incorrigibly dull, and without a scintillation of humour; and you mean to say, Charles Batchelor, that your heart once beat about *that* woman? Under the intercepted letter of that cold assassin, my heart had fallen down dead, irretrievably dead. I remember, *à propos* of the occasion of my first death, that perpetrated by Glorvina—on my second visit to

Dublin—with what a strange sensation I walked under some trees in the Phœnix Park beneath which it had been my custom to meet my False One Number 1. There were the trees—there were the birds singing—there was the bench on which we used to sit—the same, but how different! The trees had a different foliage, exquisite amaranthine; the birds sang a song paradisiacal; the bench was a bank of roses and fresh flowers, which young Love twined in fragrant chaplets around the statue of Glorvina. Roses and fresh flowers? Rheumatisms and flannel-waistcoats, you silly old man! Foliage and Song? O namby-pamby driveller! A statue?—a doll, thou twaddling old dullard!—a doll with carmine cheeks, and a heart stuffed with bran—I say, on the night preceding that ride to and from Putney, I had undergone death—in that omnibus I had been carried over to t'other side of the Stygian shore. I returned but as a passionless ghost, remembering my life-days, but not feeling any more. Love was dead, Elizabeth! Why, the Doctor came, and partook freely of lunch, and I was not angry. Yesterday I called him names, and hated him, and was jealous of him. To-day I felt no rivalship; and no envy at his success; and no desire to supplant him. No—I swear—not the slightest wish to make Elizabeth mine if she would. I might have cared for her yesterday—yesterday I had a heart. Psha! my good sir or madam. You sit by me at dinner. Perhaps you are handsome, and use your eyes. Ogle away. Don't balk yourself, pray. But if you fancy I care a three-penny piece about you—or for your eyes—or for your bonny brown hair—or for your sentimental remarks, sidelong warbled—or for your praise to (not of) my face—or for your satire behind my back—ah me!—how mistaken you are! *Peine perdue, ma chère dame!* The digestive organs are still in good working order—but the heart! *Caret.*

I was perfectly civil to Mr. Drencher, and, indeed, wonder to think how in my irritation I had allowed myself to apply (mentally) any sort of disagreeable phrases to a most excellent and deserving and good-looking young man, who is beloved by the poor, and has won the just confidence of an extensive circle of patients. I made no sort of remark to Miss Prior, except about the weather and the flowers in the garden. I was bland, easy, rather pleasant, not too high-spirited, you understand. —No: I vow you could not have seen a nerve wince, or the

slightest alteration in my demeanour. I helped the two old dowagers; I listened to their twaddle; I gaily wiped up with my napkin three-quarters of a glass of sherry which Popham flung over my trousers. I would defy you to know that I had gone through the ticklish operation of an excision of the heart a few hours previously. Heart—pooh! I saw Miss Prior's lip quiver. Without a word between us, she knew perfectly well that all was over as regarded her late humble servant. *She* winced once or twice. While Drencher was busy with his plate, the grey eyes cast towards me interjectional looks of puzzled entreaty. *She*, I say, winced; and I give you my word I did not care a fig whether she was sorry, or pleased, or happy, or going to be hanged. And I can't give a better proof of my utter indifference about the matter, than the fact that I wrote two or three copies of verses descriptive of my despair. They appeared, you may perhaps remember, in one of the annuals of those days, and were generally attributed to one of the most sentimental of our young poets. I remember the reviews said they were "replete with emotion," "full of passionate and earnest feeling," and so forth. Feeling, indeed!—ha! ha! "Passionate outbursts of a grief-stricken heart!"—Passionate scrapings of a fiddlestick, my good friend. "Lonely" of course rhymes with "only," and "gushes" with "blushes," and "despair" with "hair," and so on. Despair is perfectly compatible with a good dinner, I promise you. Hair is false: hearts are false. Grapes may be sour, but claret is good, my masters. Do you suppose I am going to cry my eyes out, because Chloe's are turned upon Strephon? If you find any whimpering in mine, may they never wink at a bee's-wing again.

When the Doctor rose presently, saying he would go and see the gardener's child, who was ill, and casting longing looks at Miss Prior, I assure you I did not feel a tittle of jealousy, though Miss Bessy actually followed Mr. Drencher on to the lawn, under the pretext of calling back Miss Cissy, who had run thither without her bonnet.

"Now, Lady Baker, which was right, you or I?" asks bonny Mrs. Bonnington, wagging her head towards the lawn where this couple of innocents were disporting.

"You thought there was an affair between Miss Prior and the medical gentleman," I say, smiling. "It was no secret, Mrs. Bonnington."

"Yes, but there were others who were a little smitten in that quarter too," says Lady Baker; and she in turn wags *her* old head towards me.

"You mean me?" I answer, as innocent as a new-born babe. "I am a burnt child, Lady Baker; I have been at the fire, and am already thoroughly done, thank you. One of your charming sex jilted me some years ago; and once is quite enough, I am much obliged to you."

This I said, not because it was true; in fact, it was the reverse of truth; but if I choose to lie about my own affairs, pray, why not? And though a strictly truth-telling man generally, when I do lie, I promise you I do it boldly and well.

"If, as I gather from Mrs. Bonnington, Mr. Drencher and Miss Prior like each other, I wish my old friend joy. I wish Mr. Drencher joy with all my heart. The match seems to me excellent. He is a deserving, a clever, and a handsome young fellow; and I am sure, ladies, you can bear witness to *her* goodness, after all you have known of her."

"My dear Batchelor," says Mrs. Bonnington, still smiling and winking, "I don't believe one single word you say—not one single word!" And she looks infinitely pleased as she speaks.

"Oh!" cries Lady Baker, "my good Mrs. Bonnington, you are always match-making—don't contradict me. You know you thought"——

"Oh, please don't," cries Mrs. B.

"I will. She thought, Mr. Batchelor, she actually thought that our son, that my Cecilia's husband, was smitten by the governess. I should like to have seen him dare!" and her flashing eyes turn towards the late Mrs. Lovel's portrait, with its faded simper leering over the harp. "The idea that any woman could succeed that angel, indeed!"

"Indeed, I don't envy her," I said.

"You don't mean, Batchelor, that my Frederick would not make any woman happy!" cries the Bonnington. "He's only seven-and-thirty, very young for his age, and the most affectionate of creatures. I am surprised, and it's most cruel, and most unkind of you, to say that you don't envy any woman that marries my boy!"

"My dear good Mrs. Bonnington, you quite misapprehend me," I remark.

"Why, when his late wife was alive," goes on Mrs. B., sobbing, "you know with what admirable sweetness and gentleness he bore her—her—bad temper—excuse me, Lady Baker!"

"Oh, pray, abuse my departed angel!" cries the Baker; "say that your son should marry and forget her—say that those darlings should be made to forget their mother. She was a woman of birth, and a woman of breeding, and a woman of family, and the Bakers came in with the Conqueror, Mrs. Bonnington"——

"I think I heard of one in the Court of Pharaoh," I interposed.

"And to say that a Baker is not worthy of a Lovel is *pretty* news indeed! Do you hear *that*, Clarence?"

"Hear what, ma'am?" says Clarence, who enters at this juncture. "You're speakin' loud enough—though blesht if I hear two sh-shyllables."

"You wretched boy, you have been smoking!"

"Shmoking—haven't I?" says Clarence with a laugh; "and I've been at the 'Five Bells,' and I've been having a game of billiards with an old friend of mine," and he lurches towards a decanter.

"Ah! don't drink any more, my child!" cries the mother.

"I'm as sober as a judge, I tell you. You leave so precious little in the bottle at dinner, that I must get it when I can, mustn't I, Batchelor, old boy? We had a row yesterday, hadn't we? No, it was sugar-baker. I'm not angry—you're not angry. Bear no malish. Here's your health, old boy!"

The unhappy gentleman drank his bumper of sherry, and, tossing his hair off his head, said—"Where's the governess—where's Bessy Bellenden? Who's that kickin' me under the table, I say?"

"Where is who?" asks his mother.

"Bessy Bellenden—the governess—that's her real name. Known her these ten years. Used to dansh at Prinsh's Theatre. Remember her in the corps-de-ballet. Ushed to go behind the shenes. Dooshid pretty girl!" maunders out the tipsy youth; and as the unconscious subject of his mischievous talk enters the room, again he cries out, "Come and sit by me, Bessy Bellenden, I say!"

The matrons rose with looks of horror in their faces. "A

ballet-dancer!" cries Mrs. Bonnington. "A ballet-dancer!" echoes Lady Baker. "Young woman, is this true?"

"The Bulbul and the Roshe—hey?" laughs the Captain. "Don't you remember you and Fosbery in blue and shpangles? Always all right, though, Bellenden was. Fosbery washn't: but Bellenden was. Give you every credit for that, Bellenden. Boxsh my ears. Bear no malish—no—no—malish! Get some more sherry, you—whatsh your name—Bedford, butler—and I'll pay you the money I owe you." And he laughs his wild laugh, utterly unconscious of the effect he is producing. Bedford stands staring at him as pale as death. Poor Miss Prior is as white as marble. Wrath, terror, and wonder are in the countenances of the dowagers. It is an awful scene!

"Mr. Batchelor knows that it was to help my family I did it," says the poor governess.

"Yes, by George! and nobody can say a word against her," bursts in Dick Bedford, with a sob; "and she is as honest as any woman here."

"Pray, who told you to put your oar in?" cries the tipsy Captain.

"And you knew that this person was on the stage, and you introduced her into my son's family? Oh, Mr. Batchelor, Mr. Batchelor, I didn't think it of you! Don't speak to me, miss!" cries the flurried Bonnington.

"You brought this woman to the children of my adored Cecilia!" calls out the other dowager. "Serpent, leave the room! Pack your trunks, viper! and quit the house this instant. Don't touch her, Cissy. Come to me, my blessing. Go away, you horrid wretch!"

"She ain't a horrid wretch; and when I was ill she was very good to us," breaks in Pop, with a roar of tears: "and you shan't go, Miss Prior—my dear pretty Miss Prior. You shan't go!" and the child rushes up to the governess, and covers her neck with tears and kisses.

"Leave her, Popham, my darling blessing!—leave that woman!" cries Lady Baker.

"I won't, you old beast!—and she sha-a-an't go. And I wish you was dead—and, my dear, you shan't go, and pa shan't let you!" shouts the boy.

"Oh, Popham, if Miss Prior has been naughty, Miss Prior must go!" says Cecilia, tossing up her head.

"Spoken like my daughter's child!" cries Lady Baker: and little Cissy, having flung her little stone, looks as if she had performed a very virtuous action.

"God bless you, Master Pop—you are a trump, you are!" says Mr. Bedford.

"Yes, that I am, Bedford; and she shan't go, shall she?" cries the boy.

But Bessy stooped down sadly and kissed him. "Yes, I must, dear," she said.

"Don't touch him! Come away, sir! Come away from her this moment!" shrieked the two mothers.

"I nursed him through the scarlet fever, when his own mother would not come near him," says Elizabeth gently.

"I'm blest if she didn't," sobs Bedford—"and—bub—bub—bless you, Master Pop!"

"That child is wicked enough, and headstrong enough, and rude enough already!" exclaims Lady Baker. "I desire, young woman, you will not pollute him further!"

"That's a hard word to say to an honest woman, ma'am," says Bedford.

"Pray, miss, are you engaged to the butler, too?" hisses out the dowager.

"There's very little the matter with Barnet's child—only teeth—— What on earth has happened? My dear Lizzie—my dear Miss Prior—what is it?" cries the Doctor, who enters from the garden at this juncture.

"Nothing has happened, only this young woman has appeared in a new *character*," says Lady Baker. "My son has just informed us that Miss Prior danced upon the stage, Mr. Drencher; and if you think such a person is a fit companion for your mother and sisters, who attend a place of Christian worship, I believe—I wish you joy."

"Is this—is this—true?" asks the Doctor, with a look of bewilderment.

"Yes, it is true," sighs the girl.

"And you never told me, Elizabeth?" groans the Doctor.

"She's as honest as any woman here," calls out Bedford. "She gave all the money to her family."

"It wasn't fair not to tell me. It wasn't fair," sobs the Doctor. And he gives her a ghastly parting look, and turns his back.

"I say, you—Hi! What-d'you-call-'im? Sawbones!" shrieks out Captain Clarence. "Come back, I say. She's all right, I say. Upon my honour, now, she's all right."

"Miss P. shouldn't have kept this from me. My mother and sisters are Dissenters, and very strict. I couldn't ask a party into my family who has been—who has been—I wish you good morning," says the Doctor, and stalks away.

"And now, will you please to get your things ready, and go too?" continues Lady Baker. "My dear Mrs. Bonnington, you think"——

"Certainly, certainly, she must go!" cries Mrs. Bonnington.

"Don't go till Lovel comes home, miss. *These* ain't your mistresses. Lady Baker don't pay your salary. If you go, I go, too. There!" calls out Bedford, and mumbles something in her ear about "the end of the world."

"You go, too; and a good riddance, you insolent brute!" exclaims the dowager.

"Oh, Captain Clarence! you have made a pretty morning's work," I say.

"I don't know what the dooce all the sherry—all the shinty's about," says the Captain, playing with the empty decanter. "Gal's a very good gal—pretty gal. If she choosesh dansh shport her family, why the doosh shouldn't she dansh shport a family?"

"That is exactly what I recommend this person to do," says Lady Baker, tossing up her head. "And now I will thank you to leave the room. Do you hear?"

As poor Elizabeth obeyed this order, Bedford darted after her; and I know ere she had gone five steps he had offered her his savings and everything he had. She might have had mine yesterday. But she had deceived me. She had played fast and loose with me. She had misled me about this Doctor. I could trust her no more. My love of yesterday was dead, I say. That vase was broken which never could be mended. She knew all was over between us. She did not once look at me as she left the room.

The two dowagers—one of them, I think, a little alarmed at her victory—left the house, and for once went away in the same barouche. The young maniac who had been the cause of the mischief staggered away, I know not whither.

About four o'clock, poor little Pinhorn, the children's maid,

came to me, well-nigh choking with tears, as she handed me a letter. "She's goin' away—and she saved both them children's lives, she did. And she've wrote to you, sir. And Bedford's a-goin'. And I'll give warnin', I will, too!" And the weeping handmaiden retires, leaving me, perhaps somewhat frightened, with the letter in my hand.

"Dear Sir," she said—"I may write you a line of thanks and farewell. I shall go to my mother. I shall soon find another place. Poor Bedford, who has a generous heart, told me that he had given you a letter of mine to Mr. D——. I saw this morning that you knew everything. I can only say now that for all your long kindnesses and friendship to my family I am always your sincere and grateful—E. P."

Yes: that was all. I think she *was* grateful. But she had not been candid with me, nor with the poor surgeon. I had no anger: far from it: a great deal of regard and goodwill, nay admiration, for the intrepid girl who had played a long hard part very cheerfully and bravely. But my foolish little flicker of love had blazed up and gone out in a day; I knew that she never could care for me. In that dismal wakeful night, after reading the letter, I had thought her character and story over, and seen to what a life of artifice and dissimulation necessity had compelled her. I did not blame her. In such circumstances, with such a family, how could she be frank and open? Poor thing! poor thing! Do we know anybody? Ah! dear me, we are most of us very lonely in the world. You who have any who love you, cling to them, and thank God. I went into the hall towards evening: her poor trunks and packages were there, and the little nurserymaid weeping over them. The sight unmanned me; and I believe I cried myself. Poor Elizabeth! And with these small chests you recommence your life's lonely voyage! I gave the girl a couple of sovereigns. She sobbed a God bless me! and burst out crying more desperately than ever. Thou hast a kind heart, little Pinhorn!

"'Miss Prior—to be called for.' Whose trunks are these?" says Lovel, coming from the City. The dowagers drove up at the same moment.

"Didn't you see us from the omnibus, Frederick?" cries her Ladyship coaxingly. "We followed behind you all the way!"

"We were in the barouche, my dear," remarks Mrs. Bonnington rather nervously.

"Whose trunks are these?—what's the matter?—and what's the girl crying for?" asks Lovel.

"Miss Prior is a-going away," sobs Pinhorn.

"Miss Prior going? Is this your doing, my Lady Baker?—or yours, mother?" the master of the house says sternly.

"She is going, my love, because she cannot stay in this family," says mamma.

"That woman is no fit companion for my angel's children, Frederick!" cries Lady B.

"That person has deceived us all, my love!" says mamma.

"Deceived?—how? Deceived whom?" continues Mr. Lovel, more and more hotly.

"Clarence, love! come down, dear! Tell Mr. Lovel everything. Come down and tell him this moment," cries Lady Baker to her son, who at this moment appears on the corridor which was round the hall.

"What's the row now, pray?" And Captain Clarence descends, breaking his shins over poor Elizabeth's trunks, and calling down on them his usual maledictions.

"Tell Mr. Lovel where you saw that—that person, Clarence. Now, sir, listen to my Cecilia's brother!"

"Saw her—saw her in blue and spangles, in the 'Rose and the Bulbul,' at the Prince's Theatre—and a doosid nice-looking girl she was too!" says the Captain.

"There, sir!"

"There, Frederick!" cry the matrons in a breath.

"And what then?" asks Lovel.

"Mercy! you ask, What then, Frederick? Do you know what a theatre is? Tell Frederick what a theatre is, Mr. Batchelor, and that my grandchildren must not be educated by"——

"My grandchildren—my Cecilia's children," shrieks the other, "must not be pol-luted by"——

"Silence!" I say. "Have you a word against her -have you, pray, Baker?"

"No. 'Gad! I never said a word against her," says the Captain. "No, hang me, you know—but"——

"But suppose I knew the fact the whole time?" asks Lovel, with rather a blush on his cheek. "Suppose I knew that she

danced to give her family bread? Suppose I knew that she toiled and laboured to support her parents, and brothers and sisters? Suppose I know that out of her pittance she has continued to support them? Suppose I know that she watched my own children through fever and danger? For these reasons I must turn her out of doors, must I? No, by Heaven!—No!—Elizabeth!—Miss Prior!—Come down!—Come here, I beg you!"

The governess, arrayed as for departure, at this moment appeared on the corridor running round the hall. As Lovel continued to speak very loud and resolute, she came down looking deadly pale.

Still much excited, the widower went up to her and took her hand. "Dear Miss Prior!" he said—"dear Elizabeth! you have been the best friend of me and mine. You tended my wife in illness, you took care of my children in fever and danger. You have been an admirable sister, daughter in your own family—and for this, and for these benefits conferred upon us, my relatives—my mother-in-law—would drive you out of my doors! It shall not be!—by heavens, it shall not be!"

You should have seen little Bedford sitting on the governess's box, shaking his fist, and crying "Hurrah!" as his master spoke. By this time the loud voices and the altercation in the hall had brought a half-dozen of servants from their quarters into the hall. "Go away, all of you!" shouts Lovel; and the domestic *posse* retires, Bedford being the last to retreat, and nodding approval at his master as he backs out of the room.

"You are very good, and kind, and generous, sir," says the pale Elizabeth, putting a handkerchief to her eyes. "But without the confidence of these ladies, I must not stay, Mr. Lovel. God bless you for your goodness to me. I must, if you please, return to my mother."

The worthy gentleman looked fiercely round at the two elder women, and again seizing the governess's hand said—"Elizabeth! dear Elizabeth! I implore you not to go! If you love the children"——

"Oh, sir!" (A cambric veil covers Miss Prior's emotion, and the expression of her face, on this ejaculation.)

"If you love the children," gasps out the widower, "stay with them. If you have a regard for—for their father"—(Timanthes, where is thy pocket-handkerchief?)—"remain in

this house, with such a title as none can question. Be the mistress of it."

"His mistress—and before me!" screams Lady Baker. "Mrs. Bonnington, this depravity is monstrous!"

"Be my wife, dear Elizabeth!" the widower continues. "Continue to watch over the children, who shall be motherless no more."

"Frederick! Frederick! haven't they got *us?*" shrieks one of the old ladies.

"Oh, my poor dear Lady Baker!" says Mrs. Bonnington.

"Oh, my poor dear Mrs. Bonnington!" says Lady Baker.

"Frederick, listen to your mother," implores Mrs. Bonnington.

"To your mothers," sobs Lady Baker.

And they both go down on their knees, and I heard a boohoo of a guffaw behind the green-baized servants door, where I have no doubt Monsieur Bedford was posted.

"Ah, Batchelor! dear Batchelor, speak to him!" cries good Mrs. Bonny. "We are praying this child, Batchelor—this child whom you used to know at College, and when he was a good gentle obedient boy. You have influence with my poor Frederick. Exert it for his heartbroken mother's sake; and you shall have my bubble-ubble-essings, you shall."

"My dear good lady," I exclaim—not liking to see the kind soul in grief.

"Send for Doctor Straightwaist! Order him to pause in his madness," cries Baker; "or it is I, Cecilia's mother, the mother of that murdered angel, that shall go mad."

"Angel? *Allons!*" I say. "Since his widowhood, you have never given the poor fellow any peace. You have been for ever quarrelling with him. You took possession of his house; bullied his servants; spoiled his children—you did, Lady Baker."

"Sir," cries her Ladyship, "you are a low, presuming, vulgar man! Clarence, beat this rude man!"

"Nay," I say, "there must be no more quarrelling to-day. And I am sure Captain Baker will not molest me. Miss Prior, I am delighted that my old friend should have found a woman of good sense, good conduct, good temper—a woman who has had many trials, and borne them with very great patience—to take charge of him, and make him happy. I congratulate you both. Miss Prior has borne poverty so well that I am certain she will bear good fortune, for it *is* good fortune to

become the wife of such a loyal, honest, kindly gentleman as Frederick Lovel."

After such a speech as that, I think I may say, *liberavi animam.* Not one word of complaint, you see, not a hint about "Edward," not a single sarcasm, though I might have launched some terrific shots out of my quiver, and have made Lovel and his bride-elect writhe before me. But what is the need of spoiling sport? Shall I growl out of my sulky manger because my comrade gets the meat? Eat it, happy dog! and be thankful. Would not that bone have choked me if I had tried it? Besides, I am accustomed to disappointment. Other fellows get the prizes which I try for. I am used to run second in the dreary race of love. Second? Psha! Third, Fourth. *Que sais-je?* There was the Bombay captain in Bess's early days. There was Edward. Here is Frederick. Go to, Charles Batchelor; repine not at fortune: but be content to be Batchelor still. My sister has children. I will be an uncle, a parent to them. Isn't Edward of the scarlet whiskers distanced? Has not poor Dick Bedford lost the race—poor Dick, who never had a chance, and is the best of us all? Besides, what fun it is to see Lady Baker deposed: think of Mrs. Prior coming in and reigning over her! The purple-faced old fury of a Baker, never will she bully, and rage, and trample more. She must pack up her traps and be off. I know she must. I *can* congratulate Lovel sincerely, and that's the fact.

And here at this very moment, and as if to add to the comicality of the scene, who should appear but mother-in-law No. 2, Mrs. Prior, with her Bluecoat boy, and two or three of her children, who had been invited, or had invited themselves, to drink tea with Lovel's young ones, as their custom was whenever they could procure an invitation. Master Prior had a fine "copy" under his arm, which he came to show to his patron Lovel. His mamma, entirely ignorant of what had happened, came fawning in with her old poke-bonnet, her old pocket, that vast depository of all sorts of stores, her old umbrella, and her usual dreary smirk. She made her obeisance to the matrons,—she led up her Bluecoat boy to Mr. Lovel, in whose office she hoped to find a clerk's place for her lad, on whose very coat and waistcoat she had designs whilst they were yet on his back: and she straightway began business with the dowagers—

"My Lady, I hope your Ladyship is quite well?" (a curtsey). "Dear kind Mrs. Bonnington! I came to pay my duty to you, mum. This is Louisa, my Lady, the great girl for whom your Ladyship so kindly promised the gown. And this is my little girl, Mrs. Bonnington, mum, please; and this is my big Blue. Go and speak to dear kind Mr. Lovel, Gus, our dear good friend and protector,—the son and son-in-law of these dear ladies. Look, sir, he has brought his copy to show you; and it's creditable to a boy of his age, isn't it, Mr. Batchelor? You can say, who know so well what writing is, and my kind services to you, sir—and—Elizabeth, Lizzie, my dear! where's your spectacles, you—you"——

Here she stopped, and looking alarmed at the group, at the boxes, at the blushing Lovel, at the pale countenance of the governess, "Gracious goodness!" she said, "what has happened? Tell me, Lizzie, what is it?"

"Is this collusion, pray?" says ruffled Mrs. Bonnington.

"Collusion, dear Mrs. Bonnington?"

"Or insolence?" bawls out my Lady Baker.

"Insolence, your Ladyship? What—what is it? What are these boxes—Lizzie's boxes? Ah!" the mother broke out with a scream, "you've not sent the poor girl away? Oh! my poor child—my poor children!"

"The Prince's Theatre has come out, Mrs. Prior," here said I.

The mother clasps her meagre hands. "It wasn't the darling's fault. It was to help her poor father in poverty. It was I who forced her to it. Oh, ladies! ladies!—don't take the bread out of the mouth of these poor orphans!"—and genuine tears rained down her yellow cheeks.

"Enough of this," says Mr. Lovel haughtily. "Mrs. Prior, your daughter is not going away. Elizabeth has promised to stay with me, and never to leave me—as governess no longer, but as"—— and here he takes Miss Prior's hand.

"His wife! Is this—is this true, Lizzie?" gasped the mother.

"Yes, mamma," meekly said Miss Elizabeth Prior.

At this the old woman flung down her umbrella, and uttering a fine scream, folds Elizabeth in her arms, and then runs up to Lovel! "My son! my son!" says she (Lovel's face was not bad, I promise you, at this salutation and salute). "Come here, children!—come, Augustus, Fanny, Louisa, kiss your

dear brother, children! And where are yours, Lizzie? Where are Pop and Cissy? Go and look for your little nephew and niece, dears: Pop and Cissy in the schoolroom, or in the garden, dears. They will be your nephew and niece now. Go and fetch them, I say."

As the young Priors filed off, Mrs. Prior turned to the two other matrons, and spoke to them with much dignity: "Most hot weather, your Ladyship, I'm sure! Mr. Bonnington must find it very hot for preaching, Mrs. Bonnington! Lor'! there's that little wretch beating my Johnny on the stairs. Have done, Pop, sir! How ever shall we make those children agree, Elizabeth?"

Quick, come to me, some skilful delineator of the British dowager, and draw me the countenances of Lady Baker and Mrs. Bonnington.

"I call this a jolly game, don't you, Batchelor, old boy?" remarks the Captain to me. "Lady Baker, my dear, I guess your Ladyship's nose is out of joint."

"O Cecilia—Cecilia! don't you shudder in your grave?" cries Lady B. "Call my people, Clarence—call Bulkeley—call my maid! Let me go, I say, from this house of horror!" and the old lady dashed into the drawing-room, where she uttered I know not what incoherent shrieks and appeals before that calm, glazed, simpering portrait of the departed Cecilia.

Now this is a truth, for which I call Lovel, his lady, Mrs. Bonnington, and Captain Clarence Baker as witnesses. Well, then, whilst Lady B. was adjuring the portrait, it is a fact that a string of Cecilia's harp—which has always been standing in the corner of the room under its shroud of Cordovan leather—a string, I say, of Cecilia's harp cracked, and went off with a loud *bong*, which struck terror into all beholders. Lady Baker's agitation at the incident was awful; I do not like to describe it—not having any wish to say anything tragic in this narrative—though that I *can* write tragedy, plays of mine (of which envious managers never could be got to see the merit) I think will prove, when they appear in my posthumous works.

Baker has always averred that at the moment when the harp-string broke, her heart broke too. But as she lived for many years, and may be alive now for what I know! and as she borrowed money repeatedly from Lovel—he must be acquitted of the charge which she constantly brings against him of hasten-

ing her own death, and murdering his first wife Cecilia. "The harp that once in Tara's halls" used to make such a piteous feeble thrumming, has been carted off I know not whither; and Cecilia's portrait, though it has been removed from the post of honour (where, you conceive, under present circumstances it would hardly be *à propos*) occupies a very reputable position in the pink room upstairs which that poor young Clarence inhabited during my visit to Shrublands.

All the house has been altered. There's a fine organ in the hall, on which Elizabeth performs sacred music very finely. As for *my* old room, I will trouble you to smoke *there* under the present government. It is a library now, with many fine and authentic pictures of the Lovel family hanging up in it, the English branch of the house with the wolf crest, and *Gare à la louve* for the motto, and a grand posthumous portrait of a Portuguese officer (Gandish), Elizabeth's late father.

As for dear old Mrs. Bonnington, she, you may be sure, would be easily reconciled to any live mortal who was kind to her, and any plan which should make her son happy; and Elizabeth has quite won her over. Mrs. Prior, on the deposition of the other dowagers, no doubt expected to reign at Shrublands, but in this object I am not very sorry to say was disappointed. Indeed, I was not a little amused, upon the very first day of her intended reign—that eventful one of which we have been describing the incidents—to see how calmly and gracefully Bessy pulled the throne from under her, on which the old lady was clambering.

Mrs. P. knew the house very well, and everything which it contained; and when Lady Baker drove off with her son and her suite of domestics, Prior dashed through the vacant apartments gleaning what had been left in the flurry of departure—a scarlet feather out of the dowager's room, a shirt-stud and a bottle of hair-oil, the Captain's property. "And now they are gone, and as you can't be alone with him, my dear, I must be with you," says she, coming down to her daughter.

"Of course, mamma, I must be with you," says obedient Elizabeth.

"And there is the pink room, and the blue room, and the yellow room for the boys—and the chintz boudoir for me—I can put them all away, oh, so comfortably!"

"I can come and share Louisa's room, mamma," says Bessy.

"It will not be proper for me to stay here at all—until afterwards, you know. Or I can go to my uncle at Saint Boniface. Don't you think that will be best, eh! Frederick?"

"Whatever you wish, my dear Lizzie!" says Lovel.

"And I dare say there will be some little alterations made in the house. You talked, you know, of painting, Mr. Lovel: and the children can go to their grandmamma Bonnington. And on our return when the alterations are made we shall always be delighted to see *you*, Mr. Batchelor—our kindest old friend. Shall we not, Frederick?"

"Always, always," said Frederick.

"Come, children, come to your teas," calls out Mrs. P. in a resolute voice.

"Dear Pop, I'm not going away—that is, only for a few days, dear," says Bessy, kissing the boy; "and you will love me, won't you?"

"All right," says the boy. But Cissy said, when the same appeal was made to her: "I shall love my dear mamma!" and makes her new mother-in-law a very polite curtsey.

"I think you had better put off those men you expect to dinner to-morrow, Fred," I say to Lovel.

"I think I had, Batch," says the gentleman.

"Or you can dine with them at the Club, you know," remarks Elizabeth.

"Yes, Bessy."

"And when the children have had their tea I will go with mamma. My boxes are ready, you know," says arch Bessy.

"And you will stay and dine with Mr. Lovel, won't you, Mr. Batchelor?" asks the lady.

It was the dreariest dinner I ever had in my life. No undertaker could be more gloomy than Bedford, as he served us. We tried to talk politics and literature. We drank too much, purposely. Nothing would do. "Hang me, if I can stand this, Lovel," I said, as we sat mum over our third bottle. "I will go back and sleep at my chambers. I was not a little soft upon her myself, that's the truth. Here's her health, and happiness to both of you, with all my heart." And we drained a great bumper apiece, and I left him. He was very happy I should go.

Bedford stood at the gate, as the little pony carriage came for me in the dusk. "God bless you, sir!" says he. "I can't

stand it; I shall go too." And he rubbed his hands over his eyes.

He married Mary Pinhorn, and they have emigrated to Melbourne; whence he sent me, three years ago, an affectionate letter, and a smart gold pin from the diggings.

A month afterwards, a cab might have been seen driving from

the Temple to Hanover Square: and a month and a day after that drive, an advertisement might have been read in the *Post* and *Times*:—

"Married, on Thursday, 10th, at St. George's, Hanover Square, by the Reverend the Master of Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge, uncle of the bride, Frederick Lovel, Esquire, of Shrublands, Roehampton, to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the late Captain Montagu Prior, K.S.F."

We may hear of LOVEL MARRIED some other day, but here is an end of LOVEL THE WIDOWER. *Valete et plaudite*, you good people who have witnessed the little comedy. Down with the curtain; cover up the boxes; pop out the gas-lights. Ho! cab! Take us home, and let us have some tea, and go to bed. Good-night, my little players. We have been merry together, and we part with soft hearts and somewhat rueful countenances, don't we?

END OF "LOVEL THE WIDOWER."

THE
WOLVES AND THE LAMB.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. HORACE MILLIKEN, *a Widower, a wealthy City Merchant.*
GEORGE MILLIKEN, *a Child, his Son.*
CAPTAIN TOUCHIT, *his Friend.*
CLARENCE KICKLEBURY, *brother to Milliken's late Wife.*
JOHN HOWELL, *M.'s Butler and confidential Servant.*
CHARLES PAGE, *Foot-boy.*
BULKELEY, *Lady Kicklebury's Servant.*
MR. BONNINGTON.
Coachman, Cabman, a Bluecoat Boy, another Boy (*Mrs. Prior's Sons*).

LADY KICKLEBURY, *Mother-in-law to Milliken.*
MRS. BONNINGTON, *Milliken's Mother* (*married again*).
MRS. PRIOR.
MISS PRIOR, *her Daughter, Governess to Milliken's Children.*
ARABELLA MILLIKEN, *a Child.*
MARY BARLOW, *Schoolroom Maid.*
A grown-up Girl and Child of Mrs. Prior's, Lady K.'s Maid, Cook.

THE
WOLVES AND THE LAMB.

ACT I.

SCENE.—MILLIKEN'S *Villa at Richmond; two drawing-rooms opening into one another. The late* MRS. MILLIKEN'S *portrait, over the mantelpiece; book-cases, writing-tables, piano, newspapers, a handsomely furnished saloon. The back room opens, with very large windows, on the lawn and pleasure-ground; gate, and wall—over which the heads of a cab and a carriage are seen, as persons arrive. Fruit, and a ladder on the walls. A door to the dining-room, another to the sleeping apartments, &c.*

John. Everybody out; governor in the City; governess (heigh-ho!) walking in the Park with the children; Ladyship gone out in the carriage. Let's sit down and have a look at the papers. Buttons! fetch the *Morning Post* out of Lady Kicklebury's room. Where's the *Daily News*, sir?

Page. Think it's in Milliken's room.

John. Milliken! you scoundrel! What do you mean by Milliken? Speak of your employer as your governor if you like; but not as simple Milliken. Confound your impudence! you'll be calling me Howell next.

Page. Well! I didn't know. *You* call him Milliken.

John. Because I know him, because I'm intimate with him, because there's not a secret he has but I may have it for the asking; because the letters addressed to Horace Milliken, Esquire, might as well be addressed John Howell, Esquire, for I read 'em, I put 'em away and docket 'em, and remember 'em. I know his affairs better than he does: his income to a

shilling, pay his tradesmen, wear his coats, if I like. *I* may call Mr. Milliken what I please; but not *you*, you little scamp of a clod-hopping ploughboy. Know your station and do your business, or you don't wear *them* buttons long, I promise you.

[*Exit Page.*

Let me go on with the paper. (*Reads*). How brilliant this writing is! *Times, Chronicle, Daily News*, they're all good, blest if they ain't. How much better the nine leaders in them three daily papers is, than nine speeches in the House of Commons! Take a very best speech in the 'Ouse now, and compare it with an article in the *Times!* I say, the newspaper has the best of it for philosophy, for wit, novelty, good sense too. And the party that writes the leading article is nobody, and the chap that speaks in the House of Commons is a hero. Lord, Lord, how the world is 'umbugged! Pop'lar representation! What *is* pop'lar representation? Dammy, it's a farce. Hallo! this article is stole! I remember a passage in Montesquieu uncommonly like it.

[*Goes and gets the book. As he is standing upon sofa to get it, and sitting down to read it, Miss Prior and the children have come in at the garden. Children pass across stage.*

Miss Prior *enters by open window, bringing flowers into the room.*

John. It *is* like it. (*He slaps the book, and seeing Miss Prior who enters, then jumps up from sofa, saying very respectfully,*) I beg your pardon, miss.

Miss Prior (*sarcastically*). Do I disturb you, Howell?

John. Disturb! I have no right to say—a servant has no right to be disturbed, but I hope I may be pardoned for venturing to look at a volume in the libery, miss, just in reference to a newspaper harticle—that's all, miss.

Miss P. You are very fortunate in finding anything to interest you in the paper, I'm sure.

John. Perhaps, miss, you are not accustomed to political discussion, and ignorant of—ah—I beg your pardon: a servant, I know, has no right to speak.

[*Exit into dining-room, making a low bow.*

Miss Prior. The coolness of some people is really quite

extraordinary! the airs they give themselves, the way in which they answer one, the books they read! Montesquieu: "Esprit des Lois!" (*Takes book up which J. has left on sofa.*) I believe the man has actually taken this from the shelf. I am sure Mr. Milliken, or her Ladyship, never would. The other day "Helvetius" was found in Mr. Howell's pantry, forsooth! It is wonderful how he picked up French whilst we were abroad! "Esprit des Lois!" what is it? it must be dreadfully stupid. And as for reading "Helvetius" (who, I suppose, was a Roman general), I really can't understand how——Dear, dear! what airs these persons give themselves! What will come next? A footman—I beg Mr. Howell's pardon—a butler and confidential valet lolls on the drawing-room sofa, and reads Montesquieu! Impudence! And add to this, he follows me for the last two or three months with eyes that are quite horrid. What can the creature mean? But I forgot—I am only a governess. A governess is not a lady—a governess is but a servant—a governess is to work and walk all day with the children, dine in the schoolroom, and come to the drawing-room to play the man of the house to sleep. A governess is a domestic, only her place is not the servants' hall, and she is paid not quite so well as the butler who serves her her glass of wine. Odious! George! Arabella! there are those little wretches quarrelling again! [*Exit.*

Children are heard calling out, and seen quarrelling in garden.

John (*re-entering*). See where she moves! grace is in all her steps. 'Eaven in her high—no—a-heaven in her heye, in every gesture dignity and love—ah, I wish I could say it! I wish you may procure it, poor fool! She passes by me—she tr-r-amples on me. Here's the chair she sets in. (*Kisses it.*) Here's the piano she plays on. Pretty keys, them fingers out-hivories you! When she plays on it, I stand and listen at the drawing-room door, and my heart thr-obs in time! Fool, fool, fool! why did you look on her, John Howell? why did you beat for her, busy heart? You were tranquil till you knew her! I thought I could have been a-happy with Mary till then. That girl's affection soothed me. Her conversation didn't amuse me much, her ideers ain't exactly elevated, but they are just and proper. Her attentions pleased me. She ever kep' the best

cup of tea for me. She crisped my buttered toast, or mixed my quiet tumbler for me, as I sat of hevenings and read my newspaper in the kitching. She respected the sanctaty of my pantry. When I was a-studying there, she never interrupted me. She darned my stockings for me, she starched and folded my chokers, and she sewed on the habsent buttons of which time and chance had bereft my linning. She has a good heart, Mary has. I know she'd get up and black the boots for me of the coldest winter mornings. She did when we was in humbler life, she did.

Enter MARY.

You have a good heart, Mary!

Mary. Have I, dear John? (*Sadly.*)

John. Yes, child—yes. I think a better never beat in woman's bosom. You're good to everybody—good to your parents whom you send half your wages to: good to your employers whom you never robbed of a halfpenny.

Mary (*whimpering*). Yes, I did, John. I took the jelly when you were in bed with the influenza; and brought you the pork-wine negus.

John. Port, not pork, child. Pork is the hanimal which Jews ab'or. Port is from Oporto in Portugal.

Mary (*still crying*). Yes, John; you know everything a'most, John.

John. And you, poor child, but little! It's not heart you want, you little trump, it's education, Mary: it's information: it's head, head, head! You can't learn. You never can learn. Your ideers ain't no good. You never can hinterchange 'em with mine. Conversation between us is impossible. It's not your fault. Some people are born clever; some are born tall —I ain't tall.

Mary. Ho! you're big enough for me, John.

[*Offers to take his hand.*

John. Let go my 'and—my a-hand, Mary! I say, some people are born with brains, and some with big figures. Look at that great ass, Bulkeley, Lady K.'s man—the besotted stupid beast! He's as big as a life-guardsman, but he ain't no more education nor ideers than the ox he feeds on.

Mary. Law, John, whathever do you mean?

John. H'm! you know not, little one! you never can know. Have *you* ever felt the pangs of imprisoned genius? have you ever felt what 'tis to be a slave?

Mary. Not in a free country, I should hope, John Howell—no such a thing. A place is a place, and I know mine, and am content with the spear of life in which it pleases Heaven to place me, John: and I wish you were, and remembered what we learned from our parson when we went to school together in dear old Pigeoncot, John—when you used to help little Mary with her lessons, John, and fought Bob Brown, the big butcher's boy, because he was rude to me, John, and he gave you that black hi.

John. Say eye, Mary, not heye (*gently*).

Mary. Eye; and I thought you never looked better in all your life than you did then; and we both took service at Squire Milliken's—me as dairy-girl, and you as knife-boy: and good masters have they been to us from our youth hup: both old Squire Milliken and Mr. Horace as is master now, and poor Mrs. as is dead, though she had her tantrums—and I thought we should save up and take the "Milliken Arms"—and now we have saved up—and now, now, now—oh, you are a stone, a stone, a stone! and I wish you were hung round my neck, and I were put down the well! There's the hupstairs bell.

[*She starts, changing her manner as she hears the bell, and exit.*

John (*looking after her*). It's all true. Gospel-true. We were children in the same village—sat on the same form at school. And it was for her sake that Bob Brown the butcher's boy whopped me. A black eye! I'm not handsome. But if I were ugly, ugly as the Saracen's 'Ead, ugly as that beast Bulkeley, I know it would be all the same to Mary. *She* has never forgot the boy she loved, that brought birds'-nests for her, and spent his halfpenny on cherries, and bought a fairing with his first half-crown—a brooch it was, I remember, of two billing doves a-hopping on one twig, and brought it home for little yellow-haired, blue-eyed, red-cheeked Mary. Lord, Lord! I don't like to think how I've kissed 'em, the pretty cheeks! they've got quite pale now with crying—and she has never once reproached me, not once, the trump, the little tr-rump!

Is it my fault (*stamping*) that Fate has separated us? Why did my young master take me up to Oxford, and give me the

run of his libery and the society of the best scouts in the University? Why did he take me abroad? Why have I been to Italy, France, Jummany with him—their manners noted and their realms surveyed, by Jingo? I've improved myself, and Mary has remained as you was. I try a conversation, and she can't respond. She's never got a word of poetry beyond Watts' Ims, and if I talk of Byron or Moore to her, I'm blest if she knows anything more about 'em than the cook, who is as hignorant as a pig, or that beast Bulkeley, Lady Kick's footman. Above all, why, why did I see the woman upon whom my wretched heart is fixed for ever, and who carries away my soul with her—prostrate, I say, prostrate, through the mud at the skirts of her gownd! Enslaver! why did I ever come near you? O enchantress Kelipso! how you have got hold of me! It was Fate, Fate, Fate. When Mrs. Milliken fell ill of scarlet fever at Naples, Milliken was away at Petersborough, Rooshia, looking after his property. Her foring woman fled. Me and the governess remained and nursed her and the children. We nursed the little ones out of the fever. We buried their mother. We brought the children home over Halp and Happenine. I nursed 'em all three, I tended 'em all three, the orphans, and the lovely gu-gu-governess. At Rome where she took ill, I waited on her; as we went to Florence, had we been attacked by twenty thousand brigands, this little arm had courage for them all! And if I loved thee, Julia, was I wrong? and if I basked in thy beauty day and night, Julia, am I not a man? and if, before this Peri, this enchantress, this gazelle, I forgot poor little Mary Barlow, how could I help it? I say, how the doose could I help it?

Enter LADY KICKLEBURY, BULKELEY *following with parcels and a spaniel.*

Lady K. Are the children and the governess come home?

John. Yes, my Lady (*in a perfectly altered tone*).

Lady K. Bulkeley, take those parcels to my sitting-room.

John. Get up, old stoopid. Push along, old daddy longlegs (*aside to Bulkeley*).

Lady K. Does any one dine here to-day, Howell?

John. Captain Touchit, my Lady.

Lady K. He's always dining here.

John. My master's oldest friend.

Lady K. Don't tell me. He comes from his Club. He smells of smoke; he is a low vulgar person. Send Pinhorn up to me when you go downstairs. [*Exit Lady K.*

John. I know. Send Pinhorn to me, means, Send my bonny brown hair, and send my beautiful complexion, and send my figure—and, O Lord! O Lord! what an old tigress that is! What an old Hector! How she do twist Milliken round her thumb! He's born to be bullied by women: and I remember him henpecked—let's see, ever since—ever since the time of that little gloveress at Woodstock, whose picture poor Mrs. M. made such a noise about when she found it in the lumber-room. Heh! *her* picture will be going into the lumber-room some day. M. must marry to get rid of his mother-in-law and mother over him: no man can stand it, not M. himself, who's a Job of a man. Isn't he? look at him!

[*As he has been speaking, the bell has rung, the Page has run to the garden-door, and* MILLIKEN *enters through the garden, laden with a hamper, bandbox, and cricket-bat.*

Milliken. Why was the carriage not sent for me, Howell? There was no cab at the station, and I have had to toil all the way up the hill with these confounded parcels of my Lady's.

John. I suppose the shower took off all the cabs, sir. When *did* a man ever git a cab in a shower? or a policeman at a pinch—or a friend when you wanted him—or anything at the right time, sir?

Milliken. But, sir, why didn't the carriage come, I say?

John. You know.

Milliken. How do you mean I know? confound your impudence!

John. Lady Kicklebury took it—your mother-in-law took it—went out a-visiting—Ham Common, Petersham—Twick'nam—doose knows where. She, and her footman, and her span'l dog.

Milliken. Well, sir, suppose her ladyship *did* take the carriage? Hasn't she a perfect right? And if the carriage was gone, I want to know, John, why the devil the pony-chaise wasn't sent with the groom? Am I to bring a bonnet-box and a hamper of fish in my own hands, I should like to know?

John. Heh! (*Laughs.*)

Milliken. Why do you grin, you Cheshire cat?

John. Your mother-in-law had the carriage; and your mother sent for the pony-chaise. Your pa wanted to go and see the Wicar of Putney. Mr. Bonnington don't like walking when he can ride.

Milliken. And why shouldn't Mr. Bonnington ride, sir, as long as there's a carriage in my stable? Mr. Bonnington has had the gout, sir! Mr. Bonnington is a clergyman, and married to my mother. He has *every* title to my respect.

John. And to your pony-chaise—yes, sir.

Milliken. And to everything he likes in this house, sir.

John. What a good fellow you are, sir! You'd give your head off your shoulders, that you would. Is the fish for dinner to-day? Bandbox for my Lady, I suppose, sir? (*Looks in.*) Turban, feathers, bugles, marabouts, spangles—doose knows what. Yes, it's for her Ladyship. (*To Page.*) Charles, take this bandbox to her Ladyship's maid. (*To his master.*) What sauce would you like with the turbot? Lobster sauce or Hollandaise? Hollandaise is best—most wholesome for you. Anybody besides Captain Touchit coming to dinner?

Milliken. No one that I know of.

John. Very good. Bring up a bottle of the brown hock? He likes the brown hock, Touchit does. [*Exit John.*

Enter Children. *They run to* MILLIKEN.

Both. How d'you do, papa? How do you do, papa?

Milliken. Kiss your old father, Arabella. Come here, George—— What?

George. Don't care for kissing—kissing's for gals. Have you brought me that bat from London?

Milliken. Yes. Here's the bat; and here's the ball (*takes one from pocket*)—and——

George. Where's the wickets, papa? O-o-o—where's the wickets? (*Howls.*)

Milliken. My dear darling boy! I left them at the office. What a silly papa I was to forget them! Parkins forgot them.

George. Then turn him away, I say! Turn him away! [*He stamps.*

Milliken. What! an old faithful clerk and servant of your

father and grandfather for thirty years past? An old man, who loves us all, and has nothing but our pay to live on?

Arabella. Oh, you naughty boy!

George. I ain't a naughty boy.

Arabella. You *are* a naughty boy.

George. He! he! he! he! [*Grins at her.*

Milliken. Hush, children! Here, Arabella darling, here is a book for you. Look—aren't they pretty pictures?

Arabella. Is it a story, papa? I don't care for stories in general. I like something instructive and serious. Grandmamma Bonnington and grandpapa say——

George. He's *not* your grandpapa.

Arabella. He *is* my grandpapa.

George. Oh, you great story! Look! look! there's a cab.

[*Runs out. The head of a Hansom cab is seen over the garden-gate. Bell rings. Page comes. Altercation between Cabman and Captain Touchit appears to go on, during which—*

Milliken. Come and kiss your old father, Arabella. He's hungry for kisses.

Arabella. Don't. I want to go and look at the cab; and to tell Captain Touchit that he mustn't use naughty words.

[*Runs towards garden. Page is seen carrying a carpet-bag.*

Enter TOUCHIT *through the open window, smoking a cigar.*

Touchit. How d'ye do, Milliken? How are tallows, hey, my noble merchant? I have brought my bag, and intend to sleep——

George. I say, godpapa——

Touchit. Well, godson!

George. Give us a cigar!

Touchit. Oh, you *enfant terrible!*

Milliken (*wheezily*). Ah—ahem——George Touchit; you wouldn't mind—a—smoking that cigar in the garden, would you? Ah—ah!

Touchit. Hullo! What's in the wind now? You used to be a most inveterate smoker, Horace.

Milliken. The fact is—my mother-in-law—Lady Kicklebury—doesn't like it, and while she's with us, you know——

Touchit. Of course, of course (*throws away cigar*). I beg

her Ladyship's pardon. I remember when you were courting her daughter she used not to mind it.

Milliken. Don't—don't allude to those times.

[*He looks up at his wife's picture.*

George. My mamma was a Kicklebury. The Kicklebury's are the oldest family in all the world. My name is George Kicklebury Milliken, of Pigeoncot, Hants; the Grove, Richmond, Surrey; and Portland Place, London, Esquire—my name is.

Touchit. You have forgotten Billiter Street, hemp and tallow merchant.

George. Oh, bother! I don't care about that. I shall leave that when I'm a man: when I'm a man and come into my property.

Milliken. You come into your property?

George. I shall, you know, when you're dead, papa. I shall have this house, and Pigeoncot; and the house in town—no, I don't mind about the house in town—and I shan't let Bella live with me—no, I won't.

Bella. No; *I* won't live with *you.* And *I'll* have Pigeoncot.

George. You shan't have Pigeoncot. I'll have it: and the ponies: and I won't let you ride them—and the dogs, and you shan't have even a puppy to play with—and the dairy—and won't I have as much cream as I like—that's all!

Touchit. What a darling boy! Your children are brought up beautifully, Milliken. It's quite delightful to see them together.

George. And I shall sink the name of Milliken, I shall.

Milliken. Sink the name? why, George?

George. Because the Millikens are nobodies—grandmamma says they are nobodies. The Kicklebury's are gentlemen, and came over with William the Conqueror.

Bella. I know when that was. One thousand one hundred and onety-one!

George. Bother when they came over! But I know this, when I come into the property I shall sink the name of Milliken.

Milliken. So you are ashamed of your father's name, are you, George, my boy?

George. Ashamed? No, I ain't ashamed. Only Kicklebury is sweller. I know it is. Grandmamma says so.

Bella. My grandmamma does not say so. *My* dear grand-

mamma says that family pride is sinful, and all belongs to this wicked world; and that in a very few years what our names are will not matter.

George. Yes, she says so because her father kept a shop; and so did pa's father keep a sort of shop—only pa's a gentleman now.

Touchit. Darling child! How I wish I were married! If I had such a dear boy as you, George, do you know what I would give him?

George (*quite pleased*). What would you give him, godpapa?

Touchit. I would give him as sound a flogging as ever boy had, my darling. I would whip this nonsense out of him. I would send him to school, where I would pray that he might be well thrashed: and if when he came home he was still ashamed of his father, I would put him apprentice to a chimney-sweep—that's what I would do.

George. I'm glad you're not my father, that's all.

Bella. And *I'm* glad you're not my father, because you are a wicked man!

Milliken. Arabella!

Bella. Grandmamma says so. He is a worldly man, and the world is wicked. And he goes to the play: and he smokes, and he says——

Touchit. Bella, what do I say?

Bella. Oh, something dreadful! You know you do! I heard you say it to the cabman.

Touchit. So I did, so I did! He asked me fifteen shillings from Piccadilly, and I told him to go to—to somebody whose name begins with a D.

Children. Here's another carriage passing!

Bella. The Lady Rumble's carriage.

George. No, it ain't: it's Captain Boxer's carriage.

[*They run into the garden.*

Touchit. And this is the pass to which you have brought yourself, Horace Milliken! Why, in your wife's time, it was better than this, my poor fellow!

Milliken. Don't speak of her in *that* way, George Touchit!

Touchit. What have I said? I am only regretting her loss for your sake. She tyrannised over you; turned your friends out of doors; took your name out of your Clubs; dragged you about from party to party, though you can no more dance

than a bear, and from opera to opera, though you don't know "God Save the Queen" from "Rule Britannia." You don't, sir; you know you don't. But Arabella was better than her mother, who has taken possession of you since your widowhood.

Milliken. My dear fellow! no, she hasn't. There's *my* mother.

Touchit. Yes, to be sure, there's Mrs. Bonnington, and they quarrel over you like the two ladies over the baby before King Solomon.

Milliken. Play the satirist, my good friend! laugh at my weakness!

Touchit. I know you to be as plucky a fellow as ever stepped, Milliken, when a man's in the case. I know you and I stood up to each other for an hour and a half at Westminster.

Milliken. Thank you! We were both dragons of war! tremendous champions! Perhaps *I am* a little soft as regards women. I know my weakness well enough; but in my case what is my remedy? Put yourself in my position. Be a widower with two young children. What is more natural than that the mother of my poor wife should come and superintend my family? My own mother can't. She has a half-dozen of little half brothers and sisters, and a husband of her own to attend to. I dare say Mr. Bonnington and my mother will come to dinner to-day.

Touchit. Of course they will, my poor old Milliken; you don't dare to dine without them.

Milliken. Don't go on in that manner, George Touchit! Why should not my stepfather and my mother dine with me? I can afford it. I am a domestic man and like to see my relations about me. I am in the City all day.

Touchit. Luckily for you.

Milliken. And my pleasure of an evening is to sit under my own vine and under my own fig-tree with my own olive-branches round about me; to sit by my fire with my children at my knees; to coze over a snug bottle of claret after dinner with a friend like you to share it; to see the young folks at the breakfast-table of a morning, and to kiss them and so off to business with a cheerful heart. This was my scheme in marrying, had it pleased Heaven to prosper my plan. When I was a boy and came from school and college, I used to see Mr. Bonnington, my father-in-law, with *his* young ones clustering round about

him, so happy to be with him! so eager to wait on him! all down on their little knees round my mother before breakfast or jumping up on his after dinner. It was who should reach his hat, and who should bring his coat, and who should fetch his umbrella, and who should get the last kiss.

Touchit. What? didn't he kiss *you?* Oh, the hard-hearted old ogre!

Milliken. Don't, Touchit! Don't laugh at Mr. Bonnington! He is as good a fellow as ever breathed. Between you and me, as my half brothers and sisters increased and multiplied year after year, I used to feel rather lonely, rather bowled out, you understand. But I saw them so happy that I longed to have a home of my own. When my mother proposed Arabella for me (for she and Lady Kicklebury were immense friends at one time), I was glad enough to give up Clubs and bachelorhood, and to settle down as a married man. My mother acted for the best. My poor wife's character, my mother used to say, changed after marriage. I was not as happy as I hoped to be; but I tried for it. George, I am not so comfortable now as I might be. A house without a mistress, with two mothers-in-law reigning over it—one worldly and aristocratic, another what you call serious, though she don't mind a rubber of whist: I give you my honour my mother plays a game at whist, and an uncommonly good game too—each woman dragging over a child to her side: of course such a family cannot be comfortable. (*Bell rings.*) There's the first dinner-bell. Go and dress, for Heaven's sake!

Touchit. Why dress? There is no company!

Milliken. Why? ah! her Ladyship likes it, you see. And it costs nothing to humour her. Quick! for she don't like to be kept waiting.

Touchit. Horace Milliken! what a pity it is the law declares a widower shall not marry his wife's mother! She would marry you else,—she would, on my word.

Enter JOHN.

John. I have took the Captain's things in the blue room, sir.

[*Exeunt gentlemen, John arranges tables, &c.*

Ha! Mrs. Prior! I ain't partial to Mrs. Prior. I think

she's an artful old dodger, Mrs. Prior. I think there's mystery in her unfathomable pockets, and schemes in the folds of her umbrella. But—but she's Julia's mother, and for the beloved one's sake I am civil to her.

Mrs. Prior. Thank you, Charles (*to the Page, who has been seen to let her in at the garden-gate*), I am so much obliged to you! Good afternoon, Mr. Howell. Is my daughter—are the darling children well? Oh, I am quite tired and weary! Three horrid omnibuses were full, and I have had to walk the whole weary long way. Ah, times are changed with me, Mr. Howell! Once when I was young and strong, I had my husband's carriage to ride in.

John (*aside*). His carriage! his coal-waggon! I know well enough who old Prior was. A merchant? yes, a pretty merchant! kep' a lodging-house, share in a barge, touting for orders, and at last a snug little place in the *Gazette*.

Mrs. Prior. How is your cough, Mr. Howell? I have brought you some lozenges for it (*takes numberless articles from her pocket*), and if you would take them of a night and morning—oh, indeed, you would get better! The late Sir Henry Halford recommended them to Mr. Prior. He was his late Majesty's physician and ours. You know we have seen happier times, Mr. Howell. Oh, I am quite tired and faint.

John. Will you take anything before the schoolroom tea, ma'am? You will stop to tea, I hope, with Miss Prior, and our young folks?

Mrs. Prior. Thank you: a little glass of wine when one is so faint—a little crumb of biscuit when one is so old and tired! I have not been accustomed to want, you know; and in my poor dear Mr. Prior's time——

John. I'll fetch some wine, ma'am.

[*Exit to the dining-room.*

Mrs. Prior. Bless the man, how abrupt he is in his manner! He quite shocks a poor lady who has been used to better days. What's here? Invitations—ho! Bills for Lady Kicklebury! *They* are not paid. Where is Mr. M. going to dine, I wonder? Captain and Mrs. Hopkinson, Sir John and Lady Tomkinson, request the pleasure. Request the pleasure! Of course they do. They are always asking Mr. M. to dinner. They have daughters to marry, and Mr. M. is a widower with three thousand a year, every shilling of it. I must tell Lady Kicklebury.

He must never go to these places—never, never—mustn't be allowed.

[*While talking, she opens all the letters on the table, rummages the portfolio and writing-box, looks at cards on mantelpiece, work in work-basket, tries tea-box, and shows the greatest activity and curiosity.*

Re-enter JOHN, *bearing a tray with cakes, a decanter, &c.*

Thank you, thank you, Mr. Howell! Oh, oh, dear me, not so much as that! Half a glass, and *one* biscuit, please. What elegant sherry! (*Sips a little, and puts down glass on tray.*) Do you know, I remember in better days, Mr. Howell, when my poor dear husband——

John. Beg your pardon. There's Milliken's bell going like mad. [*Exit John.*

Mrs. Prior. What an abrupt person! Oh, but it's comfortable, this wine is! And—and I think how my poor Charlotte would like a little—she so weak, and ordered wine by the medical man! And when dear Adolphus comes home from Christ's Hospital, quite tired, poor boy, and hungry, wouldn't a bit of nice cake do him good? Adolphus is so fond of plum-cake, the darling child! And so is Frederick, little saucy rogue; and I'll give them *my* piece, and keep my glass of wine for my dear delicate angel Shatty!

[*Takes bottle and paper out of her pocket, cuts off a great slice of cake, and pours wine from wine-glass and decanter into bottle.*

Enter Page.

Page. Master George and Miss Bella is going to have their teas down here with Miss Prior, Mrs. Prior, and she's up in the schoolroom, and my Lady says you may stay to tea.

Mrs. Prior. Thank you, Charles! How tall you grow! Those trousers would fit my darling Frederick to a nicety. Thank you, Charles! *I* know the way to the nursery.

[*Exit Mrs. P.*

Page. Know the way! I believe she *do* know the way. Been a having cake and wine. Howell always gives her cake and wine—jolly cake, ain't it? and wine, oh, my!

Re-enter JOHN.

John. You young gormandising cormorant! What! five meals a day ain't enough for you! What! beer ain't good enough for you, hey? [*Pulls boy's ears.*

Page (*crying*). Oh, oh, do-o-n't, Mr. Howell! I only took half a glass, upon my honour.

John. Your a-honour, you lying young vagabond! I wonder the ground don't open and swallow you. Half a glass! (*Holds up decanter.*) You've took half a bottle, you young Ananias! Mark this, sir! When I was a boy, a boy on my promotion, a child kindly took in from charity-school, a horphan in buttons like you, I never lied; no, nor never stole, and you've done both, you little scoundrel! Don't tell *me*, sir! there's plums on your coat, crumbs on your cheek, and you smell sherry, sir! I ain't time to whop you now, but come to my pantry to-night after you've took the tray down. Come *without your jacket on*, sir, and *then* I'll teach you what it is to lie and steal. There's the outer bell. Scud, you vagabond!

Enter LADY K.

Lady K. What was that noise, pray?

John. A difference between me and young Page, my Lady. I was instructing him to keep his hands from picking and stealing. I was learning him his lesson, my Lady, and he was a-crying it out.

Lady K. It seems to me you are most unkind to that boy, Howell. He is my boy, sir. He comes from my estate. I will not have him ill-used. I think you presume on your long services. I shall speak to my son-in-law about you. ("Yes, my Lady; no, my Lady; very good, my Lady." *John has answered each sentence as she is speaking, and exit gravely bowing.*) That man must quit the house. Horace says he can't do without him, but he *must* do without him. My poor dear Arabella was fond of him, but he presumes on that defunct angel's partiality. Horace says this person keeps all his accounts, sorts all his letters, manages all his affairs, may be trusted with untold gold, and rescued little George out of the fire. Now I have come to live with my son-in-law, *I* will keep his accounts, sort his letters, and take charge of his money: and if little Georgy gets into the grate, *I* will take him out of the fire. What is here? Invitation

from Captain and Mrs. Hopkinson. Invitation from Sir John and Lady Tomkinson, who don't even ask *me!* Monstrous! he never shall go—he shall not go!

[*Mrs. Prior has re-entered; she drops a very low curtsey to Lady K., as the latter, perceiving her, lays the cards down.*

Mrs. Prior. Ah, dear madam! how kind your Ladyship's message was to the poor lonely widow-woman! Oh, how thoughtful it was of your Ladyship to ask me to stay to tea!

Lady K. With your daughter and the children. Indeed, my good Mrs. Prior, you are very welcome!

Mrs. Prior. Ah! but isn't it a cause of thankfulness to be *made* welcome? Oughtn't I to be grateful for these blessings?—yes, I say *blessings.* And I am—I am, Lady Kicklebury—to the mother—of—that angel who is gone. (*Points to the picture.*) It was your sainted daughter left us—left my child to the care of Mr. Milliken, and—and you, who are now his guardian angel I may say. You *are*, Lady Kicklebury—you are. I say to my girl, Julia, Lady Kicklebury is Mr. Milliken's guardian angel, is *your* guardian angel—for without you could she keep her place as governess to these darling children? It would tear her heart in two to leave them, and yet she would be forced to do so. You know that some one—shall I hesitate to say whom *I mean?*—that Mr. Milliken's mother, excellent lady though she is, does not love my child because *you* love her. You *do* love her, Lady Kicklebury, and oh! a mother's fond heart pays you back! But for you, my poor Julia must go—go, and leave the children whom a dying angel confided to her!

Lady K. Go! no, never! not whilst *I* am in this house, Mrs. Prior. Your daughter is a well-behaved young woman: you have confided to me her long engagement to Lieutenant—Lieutenant What-d'you-call-'im, in the Indian service. She has been very, very good to my grandchildren—she brought them over from Naples when my—my angel of an Arabella died there, and I will protect Miss Prior.

Mrs. Prior. Bless you, bless you, noble, admirable woman! Don't take it away! I must, I *will* kiss your dear generous hand! Take a mother's, a widow's blessings, Lady Kicklebury—the blessings of one who has known misfortune and seen better days, and thanks Heaven—yes, Heaven!—for the protectors she has found!

Lady K. You said—you had—several children, I think, my good Mrs. Prior?

Mrs. Prior. Three boys—one, my eldest blessing, is in a wine-merchant's office—ah, if Mr. Milliken *would* but give him an order! an order from *this* house! an order from Lady Kicklebury's son-in-law!——

Lady K. It shall be done, my good Prior—we will see.

Mrs. Prior. Another, Adolphus, dear fellow! is in Christ's Hospital. It was dear good Mr. Milliken's nomination. Frederick is at Merchant Taylors': my darling Julia pays his schooling. Besides, I have two girls—Amelia, quite a little toddles, just the size, though not so beautiful—but in a mother's eyes all children are lovely, dear Lady Kicklebury—just the size of your dear granddaughter, whose clothes would fit her, I am sure. And my second, Charlotte, a girl as tall as your Ladyship, though not with so fine a figure. "Ah, no, Shatty!" I say to her, "you are as tall as our dear patroness, Lady Kicklebury, whom you long so to see; but you have not got her Ladyship's carriage and figure, child." Five children have I, left fatherless and penniless by my poor dear husband—but Heaven takes care of the widow and orphan, madam—and Heaven's *best creatures* feed them!—*you* know whom I mean.

Lady K. Should you not like, would you object to take—a frock or two of little Arabella's to your child? and if Pinhorn, my maid, will let me, Mrs. Prior, I will see if I cannot find something against winter for your second daughter, as you say we are of a size.

Mrs. Prior. The widow's and orphans' blessings upon you! I said my Charlotte was as tall, but I never said she had such a figure as yours—who has?

Page (*announces*). Mrs. Bonnington!

Enter MRS. BONNINGTON.

Mrs. B. How do you do, Lady Kicklebury?

Lady K. My dear Mrs. Bonnington! and you come to dinner, of course?

Mrs. B. To dine with my own son, I may take the liberty. How are my grandchildren? My darling little Emily, is she well, Mrs. Prior?

Lady K. (*aside*). Emily? why does she not call the child by

her blessed mother's name of Arabella? (*To Mrs. B.*) *Arabella* is quite well, Mrs. Bonnington. Mr. Squillings said it was nothing; only her Grandmamma Bonnington spoiling her, as usual. Mr. Bonnington and all your numerous young folk are well, I hope?

Mrs. B. My family are all in perfect health, I thank you. Is Horace come home from the City?

Lady K. Goodness! there's the dinner-bell,—I must run to dress.

Mrs. Prior. Shall I come with you, dear Lady Kicklebury?

Lady K. Not for worlds, my good Mrs. Prior.

[*Exit Lady K.*

Mrs. Prior. How do you do, my *dear* madam? Is dear Mr. Bonnington *quite* well? What a sweet sweet sermon he gave us last Sunday! I often say to my girl, I must not go to hear Mr. Bonnington, I really must not, he makes me cry so. Oh! he is a great and gifted man, and shall I not have one glimpse of him?

Mrs. B. Saturday evening, my good Mrs. Prior. Don't you know that my husband never goes out on Saturday, having his sermon to compose?

Mrs. P. Oh, those dear dear sermons! Do you know, madam, that my little Adolphus, for whom your son's bounty procured his place at Christ's Hospital, was very much touched indeed, the dear child, with Mr. Bonnington's discourse last Sunday three weeks, and refused to play marbles afterwards at school? The wicked naughty boys beat the poor child; but Adolphus has his consolation! Is Master Edward well, ma'am, and Master Robert, and Master Frederick, and dear little funny Master William?

Mrs. B. Thank you, Mrs. Prior; you have a good heart, indeed!

Mrs. P. Ah, what blessings those dears are to you! I wish your dearest little *grandson*——

Mrs. B. The little naughty wretch! Do you know, Mrs. Prior, my grandson, George Milliken, spilt the ink over my dear husband's bands, which he keeps in his great dictionary; and fought with my child, Frederick, who is three years older than George—actually beat his own uncle!

Mrs. P. Gracious mercy! Master Frederick was not hurt, I hope?

Mrs. B. No; he cried a great deal; and then Robert came up, and that graceless little George took a stick; and then my husband came out, and do you know George Milliken actually kicked Mr. Bonnington on his shins, and butted him like a little naughty ram!

Mrs. P. Mercy! mercy! what a little rebel! He is spoiled, dear madam, and you know by *whom*.

Mrs. B. By his grandmamma Kicklebury. I know it. I want my son to whip that child, but he refuses. He will come to no good, that child.

Mrs. P. Ah, madam! don't say so! Let us hope for the best. Master George's high temper will subside when certain persons who pet him are gone away.

Mrs. B. Gone away! they never will go away! No, mark my words, Mrs. Prior, that woman will never go away. She has made the house her own: she commands everything and everybody in it. She has driven me—me—Mr. Milliken's own mother—almost out of it. She has so annoyed my dear husband, that Mr. Bonnington will scarcely come here. Is she not always sneering at private tutors, because Mr. Bonnington was my son's private tutor, and greatly valued by the late Mr. Milliken? Is she not making constant allusions to old women marrying young men, because Mr. Bonnington happens to be younger than me? I have no words to express my indignation respecting Lady Kicklebury. She never pays any one, and runs up debts in the whole town. Her man Bulkeley's conduct in the neighbourhood is quite—quite——

Mrs. P. Gracious goodness, ma'am, you don't say so! And then what an appetite the gormandising monster has! Mary tells me that what he eats in the servants' hall is something perfectly frightful.

Mrs. B. Everybody feeds on my poor son! You are looking at my cap, Mrs. Prior? (*During this time Mrs. Prior has been peering into a parcel which Mrs. Bonnington brought in her hand.*) I brought it with me across the Park. I could not walk through the Park in my cap. Isn't it a pretty ribbon, Mrs. Prior?

Mrs. P. Beautiful! beautiful! How blue becomes you! Who would think you were the mother of Mr. Milliken and seven other darling children? You can afford what Lady Kicklebury cannot.

Mrs. B. And what is that, Prior? A poor clergyman's wife, with a large family, cannot afford much.

Mrs. P. He! he! You can afford to be seen as you are, which Lady K. cannot. Did you not remark how afraid she seemed lest I should enter her dressing-room? Only Pinhorn, her maid, goes there, to arrange the roses, and the lilies, and the figure—he! he! Oh, what a sweet sweet cap-ribbon! When you have worn it, and are tired of it, you will give it me, won't you? It will be good enough for poor old Martha Prior!

Mrs. B. Do you really like it? Call at Greenwood Place, Mrs. Prior, the next time you pay Richmond a visit, and bring your little girl with you, and we will see.

Mrs. P. Oh, thank you! thank you! Nay, don't be offended! I must! I must! [*Kisses Mrs. Bonnington.*

Mrs. B. There, there! We must not stay chattering! The bell has rung. I must go and put the cap on, Mrs. Prior.

Mrs. P. And I may come, too? *You* are not afraid of my seeing your hair, dear Mrs. Bonnington! Mr. Bonnington too young for *you!* Why, you don't look twenty!

Mrs. B. Oh, Mrs. Prior!

Mrs. P. Well, five-and-twenty, upon my word—not more than five-and-twenty—and that is the very prime of life!

[*Exeunt Mrs. B. and Mrs. P. hand in hand. As Captain Touchit enters dressed for dinner, he bows and passes on.*

Touchit. So, we are to wear our white cravats, and our varnished boots, and dine in ceremony. What is the use of a man being a widower, if he can't dine in his shooting-jacket? Poor Mill! He has the slavery now without the wife. (*He speaks sarcastically to the picture.*) Well, well! Mrs. Milliken! *You*, at any rate, are gone; and, with the utmost respect for you, I like your picture even better than the original. Miss Prior!

Enter MISS PRIOR.

Miss Prior. I beg pardon. I thought you were gone to dinner. I heard the second bell some time since.

[*She is drawing back.*

Touchit. Stop! I say, Julia! (*She returns, he looks at her, takes her hand.*) Why do you dress yourself in this odd poky way? You used to be a very smartly dressed girl. Why do you hide your hair, and wear such a dowdy high gown, Julia?

Julia. You mustn't call me Julia, Captain Touchit.

Touchit. Why? when I lived in your mother's lodging, I called you Julia. When you brought up the tea, you didn't mind being called Julia. When we used to go to the play with the tickets the Editor gave us, who lived on the second floor——

Julia. The wretch!—don't speak of him!

Touchit. Ah! I am afraid he was a sad deceiver, that Editor. He was a very clever fellow. What droll songs he used to sing! What a heap of play-tickets, diorama-tickets, concert-tickets, he used to give you! Did he touch your heart, Julia?

Julia. Fiddledeedee! No man ever touched my heart, Captain Touchit.

Touchit. What! not even Tom Flight, who had the second floor after the Editor left it—and who cried so bitterly at the idea of going out to India without you? You had a *tendre* for him—a little passion—you know you had. Why, even the ladies here know it. Mrs. Bonnington told me that you were waiting for a sweetheart in India, to whom you were engaged; and Lady Kicklebury thinks you are dying in love for the absent swain.

Julia. I hope—I hope—you did not contradict them, Captain Touchit?

Touchit. Why not, my dear?

Julia. May I be frank with you? You were a kind, very kind friend to us—to me, in my youth.

Touchit. I paid my lodgings regularly, and my bills without asking questions. I never weighed the tea in the caddy, or counted the lumps of sugar, or heeded the rapid consumption of my *liqueur*——

Julia. Hush, hush! I know they were taken. I know you were very good to us. You helped my poor papa out of many a difficulty.

Touchit (*aside*). Tipsy old coal-merchant! I did, and he helped himself too.

Julia. And you were always our best friend, Captain Touchit. When our misfortunes came, you got me this situation with Mrs. Milliken—and, and—don't you see——

Touchit. Well—what?

Julia (*laughing*). I think it is best, under the circumstances, that the ladies here should suppose I am engaged to be married—or—or, they might be—might be jealous, you understand.

Women are sometimes jealous of others,—especially mothers and mothers-in-law.

Touchit. Oh, you arch-schemer! And it is for that you cover up that beautiful hair of yours, and wear that demure cap?

Julia (*slyly*). I am subject to rheumatism in the head, Captain Touchit.

Touchit. Is it for that you put on the spectacles, and make yourself look a hundred years old?

Julia. My eyes are weak, Captain Touchit.

Touchit. Weak with weeping for Tom Flight. You hypocrite! Show me your eyes!

Miss P. Nonsense!

Touchit. Show me your eyes, I say, or I'll tell about Tom Flight, and that he has been married at Madras these two years.

Miss P. Oh, you horrid man! (*Takes glasses off.*) There!

Touchit. Translucent orbs! beams of flashing light! lovely lashes veiling celestial brightness! No, they haven't cried much for Tom Flight, that faithless captain! nor for Lawrence O'Reilly, that killing Editor. It is lucky you keep the glasses on them, or they would transfix Horace Milliken, my friend the widower here. *Do* you always wear them when you are alone with him?

Miss P. I never *am* alone with him. Bless me! If Lady Kicklebury thought my eyes were—well, well—you know what I mean,—if she thought her son-in-law looked at me, I should be turned out of doors the next day, I am sure I should. And then, poor Mr. Milliken! he never looks at *me*—Heaven help him! Why, he can't see me for her Ladyship's nose and awful caps and ribbons! He sits and looks at the portrait yonder, and sighs so. He thinks that he is lost in grief for his wife at this very moment.

Touchit. What a woman that was—eh, Julia?—that departed angel! What a temper she had before her departure!

Miss P. But the wind was tempered to the lamb. If she was angry—the lamb was so very lamblike, and meek, and fleecy.

Touchit. And what a desperate flirt the departed angel was! I knew half-a-dozen fellows, before her marriage, whom she threw over because Milliken was so rich.

Miss P. She was consistent at least, and did not change after marriage, as some ladies do; but flirted, as you call it, just as

much as before. At Paris, young Mr. Verney, the attaché, was never out of the house: at Rome, Mr. Beard, the artist, was always drawing pictures of her: at Naples, when poor Mr. M. went away to look after his affairs at Saint Petersburg, little Count Posilippo was for ever coming to learn English and practise duets. She scarcely ever saw the poor children. (*Changing her manner as Lady Kicklebury enters.*) Hush—my Lady!

Touchit. You may well say, "poor children," deprived of such a woman! Miss Prior, whom I knew in very early days—as your Ladyship knows—was speaking—was speaking of the loss our poor friend sustained.

Lady K. Ah, sir, what a loss! [*Looking at the picture.*

Touchit. What a woman she was—what a superior creature!

Lady K. A creature—an angel!

Touchit. Mercy upon us! how she and my Lady used to quarrel! (*Aside.*) What a temper!

Lady K. Hm—oh, yes—what a temper! (*Rather doubtfully at first.*)

Touchit. What a loss to Milliken and the darling children!

Miss Prior. Luckily they have *you* with them, madam.

Lady K. And I will stay with them, Miss Prior; I will stay with them! I will never part from Horace, I am determined.

Miss P. Ah! I am very glad you stay, for if I had not you for a protector, I think you know I must go, Lady Kicklebury. I think you know there are those who would forget my attachment to these darling children, my services to—to her—and dismiss the poor governess. But while you stay I can stay, dear Lady Kicklebury! With you to defend me from jealousy I need not *quite* be afraid.

Lady K. Of Mrs. Bonnington? Of Mr. Milliken's mother; of the parson's wife who writes out his stupid sermons, and has half-a-dozen children of her own? I should think *not* indeed! *I* am the natural protector of these children. *I* am their mother. *I* have no husband. You *stay* in this house, Miss Prior. You are a faithful attached creature—though you were sent in by somebody I don't like very much.

[*Pointing to Touchit, who went off laughing when Julia began her speech, and is now looking at prints, &c., in next room.*

Miss P. Captain Touchit may not be in all things what one could wish. But his kindness has formed the happiness of my

life in making me acquainted with *you*, ma'am: and I am sure you would not have me be ungrateful to him.

Lady K. A most highly principled young woman.

[*Goes out in garden and walks up and down with Captain Touchit.*

Enter MRS. BONNINGTON.

Miss P. Oh, how glad I am you are come, Mrs. Bonnington! Have you brought me that pretty hymn you promised me? You always keep your promises, even to poor governesses. I read dear Mr. Bonnington's sermon! It was so interesting that I really could not think of going to sleep until I had read it all through; it was delightful, but oh! it's still better when he preaches it! I hope I did not do wrong in copying a part of it? I wish to impress it on the children. There are some worldly influences at work with them, dear madam (*looking at Lady K. in the garden*), which I do my feeble effort to—to modify. I wish *you* could come oftener.

Mrs. B. I will try, my dear—I will try. Emily has sweet dispositions.

Miss P. Ah, she takes after her grandmamma Bonnington!

Mrs. B. But George was sadly fractious just now in the schoolroom because I tried him with a tract.

Miss P. Let us hope for better times! Do be with your children, dear Mrs. Bonnington, as constantly as ever you can, for *my* sake as well as theirs! *I* want protection and advice as well as they do. The *governess*, dear lady, looks up to you as well as the pupils; *she* wants the teaching which you and dear Mr. Bonnington can give her! Ah, why could not Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington come and live here, I often think! The children would have companions in their dear young uncles and aunts; so pleasant it would be. The house is quite large enough: that is, if her Ladyship did not occupy the three south rooms in the left wing. Ah, why, *why* couldn't you come?

Mrs. B. You are a kind affectionate creature, Miss Prior. I do not very much like the gentleman who recommended you to Arabella, you know. But I do think he sent my son a good governess for his children.

[*Ladies walk up and down in front garden.*

TOUCHIT *enters.*

Touchit. Miss Julia Prior, you are a wonder! I watch you with respect and surprise.

Miss P. Me! what have I done? a poor friendless governess —respect *me?*

Touchit. I have a mind to tell those two ladies what I think of Miss Julia Prior. If they knew you as I know you, O Julia Prior, what a short reign yours would be!

Miss P. I have to manage them a little. Each separately it is not so difficult. But when they are together, oh, it is very hard sometimes.

Enter MILLIKEN *dressed, shakes hands with* MISS P.

Milliken. Miss Prior! are you well? Have the children been good? and learned all their lessons?

Miss P. The children are pretty good, sir.

Milliken. Well, that's a great deal as times go. Do not bother them with too much learning, Miss Prior. Let them have an easy life. Time enough for trouble when age comes.

Enter JOHN.

John. Dinner, sir. [*And exit.*

Milliken. Dinner, ladies. My Lady Kicklebury.

[*Gives arm to Lady K.*

Lady K. My dear Horace, you *shouldn't* shake hands with Miss Prior. You should keep people of that class at a distance, my dear creature.

[*They go in to dinner, Captain Touchit following with Mrs. Bonnington. As they go out, enter Mary with children's tea-tray, &c., Children following, and after them Mrs. Prior. Mary gives her tea.*

Mrs. Prior. Thank you, Mary! You are so very kind! Oh, what delicious tea!

George. I say, Mrs. Prior, I dare say you would like to dine best, wouldn't you?

Mrs. P. Bless you, my darling love, I had my dinner at one o'clock with my children at home.

George. So had we: but we go in to dessert very often; and then don't we have cakes and oranges and candied peel and

macaroons and things! We are not to go in to-day; because Bella ate so many strawberries she made herself ill.

Bella. So did you.

George. I'm a man, and men eat more than women, twice as much as women. When I'm a man I'll eat as much cake as ever I like. I say, Mary, give us the marmalade.

Mrs. P. Oh, what nice marmalade! *I* know of some poor children——

Miss P. Mamma! don't, mamma. (*In an imploring tone.*)

Mrs. P. I know of two poor children at home, who have very seldom nice marmalade and cake, young people.

George. You mean Adolphus and Frederick and Amelia, your children. Well, they shall have marmalade and cake.

Bella. Oh, yes! I'll give them mine.

Mrs. P. Darling dearest child!

George (*his mouth full*). I won't give 'em mine; but they can have another pot, you know. You have always got a basket with you, Mrs. Prior. I know you have. You had it that day you took the cold fowl.

Mrs. P. For the poor blind black man! oh, how thankful he was!

George. I don't know whether it was for a black man. Mary, get us another pot of marmalade.

Mary. I don't know, Master George.

George. I *will* have another pot of marmalade. If you don't, I'll—I'll smash everything—I will.

Bella. Oh, you naughty rude boy!

George. Hold *your* tongue! I *will* have it. Mary shall go and get it.

Mrs. P. Do humour him, Mary; and I'm sure my poor children at home will be the better for it.

George. There's your basket! now put this cake in, and this pat of butter, and this sugar. Hurray, hurray! Oh, what jolly fun! Tell Adolphus and Amelia I sent it to them—tell 'em they shall never want for anything as long as George Kicklebury Milliken, Esquire, can give it 'em. Did Adolphus like my grey coat that I didn't want?

Miss P. You did not give him your new grey coat?

George. Don't you speak to me; I'm going to school—I'm not going to have no more governesses soon.

Mrs. P. Oh, my dear Master George, what a nice coat it is, and how well my poor boy looked in it!

Miss P. Don't, mamma! I pray and entreat you not to take the things!

Enter JOHN *from dining-room with a tray.*

John. Some cream, some jelly, a little champagne, Miss Prior! I thought you might like some.

George. Oh, jolly! give us hold of the jelly! give us a glass of champagne.

John. I will not give you any.

George. I'll smash every glass in the room if you don't; I'll cut my fingers; I'll poison myself—there! I'll eat all this sealing-wax if you don't, and it's rank poison, you know it is.

Mrs. P. My dear Master George! [*Exit John.*

George. Ha, ha! I knew you'd give it me; another boy taught me that.

Bella. And a very naughty rude boy.

George. He, he, he! hold your tongue, miss! And said he always got wine so; and so I used to do it to my poor mamma, Mrs. Prior. Usedn't to like mamma much.

Bella. Oh, you wicked boy!

George. She usedn't to see us much. She used to say I tried her nerves: what's nerves, Mrs. Prior? Give us some more champagne! Will have it! Ha, ha, ha! ain't it jolly? Now I'll go out and have a run in the garden. [*Runs into garden.*

Mrs. P. And you, my dear?

Bella. I shall go and resume the perusal of the "Pilgrim's Progress," which my grandpapa, Mr. Bonnington, sent me. [*Exit Arabella.*

Miss P. How those children are spoilt! Goodness, what can I do? If I correct one, he flies to grandmamma Kicklebury; if I speak to another, she appeals to grandmamma Bonnington. When I was alone with them, I had them in something like order. Now, between the one grandmother and the other, the children are going to ruin, and so would the house too, but that Howell—that odd, rude, but honest and intelligent creature, I must say—keeps it up. It is wonderful how a person in his rank of life should have instructed himself

so. He really knows—I really think he knows more than I do myself.

Mrs. P. Julia dear!

Miss P. What is it, mamma?

Mrs. P. Your little sister wants some underclothing sadly, Julia dear, and poor Adolphus's shoes are quite worn out.

Miss P. I thought so; I have given you all I could, mamma.

Mrs. P. Yes, my love! you are a good love, and generous, Heaven knows, to your poor old mother who has seen better days. If we had not wanted, would I have ever allowed you to be a governess—a poor degraded governess? If that brute O'Reilly who lived on our second floor had not behaved so shamefully wicked to you, and married Miss Flack, the singer, might you not have been editress of the *Champion of Liberty* at this very moment, and had your opera-box every night?

[*She drinks champagne while talking, and excites herself.*

Miss P. Don't take that, mamma!

Mrs. P. Don't take it? why, it costs nothing; Milliken can afford it. Do you suppose I get champagne every day? I might have had it as a girl when I first married your father, and we kep' our gig and horse, and lived at Clapham, and had the best of everything. But the coal-trade is not what it was, Julia. We met with misfortunes, Julia, and we went into poverty: and your poor father went into the Bench for twenty-three months—two year all but a month he did—and my poor girl was obliged to dance at the "Coburg Theatre"—yes, you were, at ten shillings a week, in the Oriental ballet of "The Bulbul and the Rose:" you were, my poor darling child!

Miss P. Hush, hush, mamma!

Mrs. P. And we kep' a lodging-house in Bury Street, Saint James's, which your father's brother furnished for us, who was an extensive oil-merchant. He brought you up; and afterwards he quarrelled with my poor James, Robert Prior did, and he died, not leaving us a shilling. And my dear eldest boy went into a wine-merchant's office: and my poor darling Julia became a governess, when you had had the best of education at Clapham; you had, Julia. And to think that you were obliged, my blessed thing, to go on in the Oriental ballet of "The Rose and the Bul——"

Miss P. Mamma, hush, hush! forget that story.

Enter PAGE *from dining-room.*

Page. Miss Prior! please, the ladies are coming from the dining-room. Mrs. B. have had her two glasses of port, and her Ladyship is now a-telling the story about the Prince of Wales when she danced with him at Carlton House. [*Exit Page.*

Miss P. Quick, quick! There, take your basket! Put on your bonnet, and good night, mamma. Here, here is a half-sovereign and three shillings: it is all the money I have in the world; take it, and buy the shoes for Adolphus.

Mrs. P. And the underclothing, my love—little Amelia's underclothing?

Miss P. We will see about it. Good night. (*Kisses her.*) Don't be seen here,—Lady K. doesn't like it.

Enter Gentlemen *and* Ladies *from dining-room.*

Lady K. We follow the Continental fashion. We don't sit after dinner, Captain Touchit.

Touchit. Confound the Continental fashion! I like to sit a little while after dinner. [*Aside.*

Mrs. B. So does my dear Mr. Bonnington, Captain Touchit. He likes a little port wine after dinner.

Touchit. I'm not surprised at it, ma'am.

Mrs. B. When did you say your son was coming, Lady Kicklebury?

Lady K. My Clarence? He will be here immediately, I hope, the dear boy!—You know my Clarence?

Touchit. Yes, ma'am.

Lady K. And like him, I'm sure, Captain Touchit! Everybody does like Clarence Kicklebury.

Touchit. The confounded young scamp! I say, Horace, do you like your brother-in-law?

Milliken. Well—I—I can't say—I—like him—in fact, I don't. But that's no reason why his mother shouldn't.

[*During this, Howell, preceded by Bulkeley, hands round coffee. The garden without has darkened, as if evening. Bulkeley is going away without offering coffee to Miss Prior. John stamps on his foot, and points to her. Captain Touchit, laughing, goes up and talks to her now the servants are gone.*

Mrs. B. Horace! I must tell you that the waste at your table is

shocking. What is the need of opening all this wine? You and Lady Kicklebury were the only persons who took champagne.

Touchit. I never drink it—never touch the rubbish! Too old a stager!

Lady K. Port, I think, is your favourite, Mrs. Bonnington?

Mrs. B. My dear lady, I do not mean that you should not have champagne, if you like. Pray, pray, don't be angry! But why on earth, for you, who take so little, and Horace, who only drinks it to keep you company, should not Howell open a pint instead of a great large bottle?

Lady K. Oh, Howell! Howell! We must not mention Howell, my dear Mrs. Bonnington. Howell is faultless! Howell has the keys of everything! Howell is not to be controlled in anything! Howell is to be at liberty to be rude to my servant!

Milliken. Is that all? I am sure I should have thought your man was big enough to resent any rudeness from poor little Howell.

Lady K. Horace! Excuse me for saying that you don't know —the—the class of servant to whom Bulkeley belongs. I had him, as a great favour, from Lord Toddleby. That class of servant is accustomed generally not to go out single.

Milliken. Unless they are two behind a carriage-perch, they pine away, as one love-bird does without his mate!

Lady K. No doubt! no doubt! I only say you are not accustomed here—in this kind of establishment, you understand —to that class of——

Mrs. B. Lady Kicklebury! is my son's establishment not good enough for any powdered monster in England? Is the house of a British merchant——

Lady K. My dear creature! my dear creature! it *is* the house of a British merchant, and a very comfortable house.

Mrs. B. Yes, as you find it.

Lady K. Yes, as I find it, when I come to take care of my departed angel's children, Mrs. Bonnington—(*pointing to picture*)—of *that* dear seraph's orphans, Mrs. Bonnington. *You* cannot. You have other duties—other children—a husband at home in delicate health, who——

Mrs. B. Lady Kicklebury, no one shall say I don't take care of my dear husband!

Milliken. My dear mother! My dear Lady Kicklebury!

(*To T., who has come forward.*) They spar so every night they meet, Touchit. Ain't it hard?

Lady K. I say you *do* take care of Mr. Bonnington, Mrs. Bonnington, my dear creature! and that is why you can't attend to Horace. And as he is of a very easy temper—except sometimes with his poor Arabella's mother—he allows all his tradesmen to cheat him, all his servants to cheat him, Howell to be rude to everybody—to me amongst other people, and why not to my servant Bulkeley, with whom Lord Toddleby's groom of the chambers gave me the very highest character?

Mrs. B. I'm surprised that noblemen *have* grooms in their chambers. I should think they were much better in the stables. I am sure I always think so when we dine with Doctor Clinker. His man does bring such a smell of the stable with him.

Lady K. He! he! you mistake, my dearest creature? Your poor mother mistakes, my good Horace. You have lived in a quiet and most respectable sphere—but not—not——

Mrs. B. Not what, Lady Kicklebury? We have lived at Richmond twenty years—in my late husband's time—when we saw a great deal of company, and when this dear Horace was a dear boy at Westminster School. And we have *paid* for everything we have had for twenty years, and we have owed not a penny to any *tradesman*, though we mayn't have had *powdered footmen six feet high*, who were impertinent to all the maids in the place——Don't! I *will* speak, Horace—but servants who loved us, and who lived in our families.

Milliken. Mamma, now, my dear good old mother! I am sure Lady Kicklebury meant no harm.

Lady K. Me! my dear Horace! harm! What harm could I mean?

Milliken. Come! let us have a game at whist. Touchit, will you make a fourth? They go on so every night almost. Ain't it a pity, now?

Touchit. Miss Prior generally plays, doesn't she?

Milliken. And a very good player, too. But I thought you might like it.

Touchit. Well, not exactly. I don't like sixpenny points, Horace, or quarrelling with old dragons about the odd trick. I will go and smoke a cigar on the terrace, and contemplate the silver Thames, the darkling woods, the starry hosts of heaven. I like smoking better than playing whist. [*Milliken rings bell.*

Milliken. Ah, George! you are not fit for domestic felicity.
Touchit. No, not exactly.

Enter HOWELL.

Milliken. Lights and a whist table. Oh, I see you bring 'em. You know everything I want. He knows everything I want, Howell does. Let us cut. Miss Prior, you and I are partners!

ACT II.

SCENE.—*As before.*

Lady K. Don't smoke, you naughty boy! I don't like it. Besides, it will encourage your brother-in-law to smoke.

Clarence K. Anything to oblige you, I'm sure. But can't do without it, mother; it's good for my health. When I was in the Plungers, our doctor used to say, "You ought never to smoke more than eight cigars a day"—an order, you know, to do it—don't you see?

Lady K. Ah, my child! I am very glad you are not with those unfortunate people in the East.

K. So am I. Sold out just in time. Much better fun being here, than having the cholera at Scutari. Nice house, Milliken's. Snob, but good fellow—good cellar, doosid good cook. Really, that salmi yesterday,—couldn't have it better done at the "Rag" now. You have got into good quarters here, mother.

Lady K. The meals are very good, and the house is very good; the manners are not of the first order. But what can you expect of City people? I always told your poor dear sister, when she married Mr. Milliken, that she might look for everything substantial,—but not manners. Poor dear Arabella *would* marry him.

K. Would! that is a good one, mamma! Why, you made her! It's a dozen years ago. But I recollect, when I came home from Eton, seeing her crying because Charley Tufton——

Lady K. Mr. Tufton had not a shilling to bless himself with. The marriage was absurd and impossible.

K. He hadn't a shilling then. I guess he has plenty now.

Elder brother killed, out hunting. Father dead. Tuf a baronet, with four thousand a year if he's a shilling.

Lady K. Not so much.

K. Four thousand if it's a shilling. Why, the property adjoins Kicklebury's—I ought to know. I've shot over it a thousand times. Heh! *I* remember, when I was quite a young 'un, how Arabella used to go out into Tufton Park to meet Charley—and he is a doosid good fellow, and a gentleman-like fellow, and a doosid deal better than this City fellow.

Lady K. If you don't like this City fellow, Clarence, why do you come here? why didn't you stop with your elder brother at Kicklebury?

K. Why didn't I? Why didn't *you* stop at Kicklebury, mamma? Because you had notice to quit. Serious daughter-in-law, quarrels about management of the house—row in the building. My brother interferes, and politely requests mamma to shorten her visit. So it is with your other two daughters; so it was with Arabella when she was alive. What shindies you used to have with her, Lady Kicklebury! Heh! I had a row with my brother and sister about a confounded little nursery-maid.

Lady K. Clarence!

K. And so I had notice to quit too. And I'm in very good quarters here, and I intend to stay in 'em, mamma. I say——

Lady K. What do you say?

K. Since I sold out, you know, and the regiment went abroad, confound me, the brutes at the "Rag" will hardly speak to me! I was so ill, I couldn't go. Who the doose can live the life I've led and keep health enough for that infernal Crimea? Besides, how could I help it? I was so cursedly in debt that I was *obliged* to have the money, you know. *You* hadn't got any.

Lady K. Not a halfpenny, my darling. I am dreadfully in debt myself.

K. I know you are. So am I. My brother wouldn't give me any, not a dump. Hang him! Said he had his children to look to. Milliken wouldn't advance me any more—said I did him in that horse transaction. He! he! he! so I did! What had I to do but to sell out? And the fellows cut me, by Jove! Ain't it too bad? I'll take my name off the "Rag," I will, though.

Lady K. We must sow our wild oats, and we must sober down; and we must live here, where the living is very good and very cheap, Clarence, you naughty boy! And we must get you a rich wife. Did you see at church yesterday that young woman in light green, with rather red hair and a pink bonnet?

K. I was asleep, ma'am, most of the time, or I was bookin' up the odds for the Chester Cup. When I'm bookin' up, I think of nothin' else, ma'am,—nothin'.

Lady K. That was Miss Brocksopp—Briggs, Brown, and Brocksopp, the great sugar-bakers. They say she will have eighty thousand pound. We will ask her to dinner here.

K. I say—why the doose do you have such old women to dinner here? Why don't you get some pretty girls? Such a set of confounded old frumps as eat Milliken's mutton I never saw. There's you, and his old mother Mrs. Bonnington, and old Mrs. Fogram, and old Miss What's-her-name, the woman with the squint eye, and that immense Mrs. Crowder. It's so stoopid, that if it weren't for Touchit coming down sometimes, and the billiards and boatin', I should die here—expire, by gad! Why don't you have some pretty women into the house, Lady Kicklebury?

Lady K. Why? Do you think I want that picture taken down: and another Mrs. Milliken? Wisehead! If Horace married again, would he be your banker, and keep this house, now that ungrateful son of mine has turned me out of his? No pretty woman shall come into the house whilst I am here.

K. Governess seems a pretty woman: weak eyes, bad figure, poky, badly dressed, but doosid pretty woman.

Lady K. Bah! There is no danger from *her*. She is a most faithful creature, attached to me beyond everything. And her eyes—her eyes are weak with crying for some young man who is in India. She has his miniature in her room, locked up in one of her drawers.

K. Then how the doose did you come to see it?

Lady K. We see a number of things, Clarence. Will you drive with me?

K. Not as I knows on, thank you. No, ma; drivin's *too* slow: and you're going to call on two or three old dowagers in the Park? Thank your Ladyship for the delightful offer.

Enter JOHN.

John. Please, sir, here's the man with the bill for the boats; two pound three.

K. Damn it, pay it—don't bother *me!*

John. Haven't got the money, sir.

Lady K. Howell! I saw Mr. Milliken give you a cheque for twenty-five pounds before he went into town this morning. Look, sir. (*Runs, opens drawer, takes out cheque-book.*) There it is, marked "Howell, £25."

John. Would your Ladyship like to step down into my pantry and see what I've paid with the twenty-five pounds? Did my master leave any orders that your Ladyship was to inspect my accounts?

Lady K. Step down into the pantry! inspect your accounts! I never heard such impertinence. What do you mean, sir?

K. Dammy, sir, what do you mean?

John. I thought as her Ladyship kept a heye over my master's private book, she might like to look at mine too.

Lady K. Upon my word, this insolence is too much.

John. I beg your Ladyship's pardon. I am sure I have said nothing.

K. Said, sir! your manner is mutinous, by Jove, sir! if I had you in the regiment——

John. I understood that you had left the regiment, sir, just before it went on the campaign, sir.

K. Confound you, sir! [*Starts up.*

Lady K. Clarence, my child, my child!

John. Your Ladyship needn't be alarmed; I'm a little man, my Lady, but I don't think Mr. Clarence was a-goin' for to hit me, my Lady; not before a lady, I'm sure. I suppose, sir, that you *won't* pay the boatman?

K. No, sir, I won't pay him, nor any man who uses this sort of damned impertinence!

John. I told Rullocks, sir, I thought it was *jest* possible you wouldn't. [*Exit.*

K. That's a nice man, that is—an impudent villain!

Lady K. Ruined by Horace's weakness. He ruins everybody, poor good-natured Horace!

K. Why don't you get rid of the blackguard?

Lady K. There is a time for all things, my dear. This man

is very convenient to Horace. Mr. Milliken is exceedingly lazy, and Howell spares him a great deal of trouble. Some day or other I shall take all this domestic trouble off his hands. But not yet: your poor brother-in-law is restive, like many weak men. He is subjected to other influences: his odious mother thwarts me a great deal.

K. Why, you used to be the dearest friends in the world. I recollect when I was at Eton——

Lady K. Were; but friendship don't last for ever. Mrs. Bonnington and I have had serious differences since I came to live here: she has a natural jealousy, perhaps, at my superintending her son's affairs. When she ceases to visit at the house, as she very possibly will, things will go more easily; and Mr. Howell will go too, you may depend upon it. I am always sorry when my temper breaks out, as it will sometimes.

K. Won't it, that's all!

Lady K. At his insolence, my temper is high; so is yours, my dear. Calm it for the present, especially as regards Howell.

K. Gad! d'you know I was very nearly pitching into him? But once, one night in the Haymarket, at a lobster-shop, where I was with some fellows, we chaffed some other fellows, and there was one fellah—quite a little fellah—and I pitched into him, and he gave me the most confounded lickin' I ever had in my life, since my brother Kicklebury licked me when we were at Eton; and that, you see, was a lesson to me, ma'am. Never trust those little fellows, never chaff 'em: dammy, they may be boxers.

Lady K. You quarrelsome boy! I remember you coming home with your naughty head *so* bruised. (*Looks at watch.*) I must go now to take my drive. [*Exit Lady K.*

K. I owe a doose of a tick at that billiard-room; I shall have that boatman dunnin' me. Why hasn't Milliken got any horses to ride? Hang him! suppose he can't ride—suppose he's a tailor. He ain't *my* tailor though, though I owe him a doosid deal of money. There goes mamma with that darling nephew and niece of mine.

Enter BULKELEY.

Why haven't you gone with my Lady, you sir? (*to Bulkeley.*)

Bulkeley. My Lady have a-took the pony-carriage, sir; Mrs. Bonnington have a-took the hopen carriage and 'orses, sir, this

mornin', which the Bishop of London is 'olding a confirmation at Teddington, sir, and Mr. Bonnington is attending the serimony. And I have told Mr. 'Owell, sir, that my Lady would prefer the hopen carriage, sir, which I like the hexercise myself, sir, and that the pony-carriage was good enough for Mrs. Bonnington, sir; and Mr. 'Owell was very hinsolent to me, sir; and I don't think I can stay in the 'ouse with him.

K. Hold your jaw, sir.

Bulkeley. Yes, sir. [*Exit Bulkeley.*

K. I wonder who that governess is—sang rather prettily last night—wish she'd come and sing now—wish she'd come and amuse me—I've seen her face before—where have I seen her face?—it ain't at all a bad one. What shall I do? dammy, I'll read a book: I've not read a book this ever so long. What's here?

[*Looks amongst books, selects one, sinks down in easy chair so as quite to be lost.*

Enter Miss Prior.

" *Miss Prior.* There's peace in the house! those noisy children are away with their grandmamma. The weather is beautiful, and I hope they will take a long drive. Now I can have a quiet half-hour, and finish that dear pretty "Ruth"—oh, how it makes me cry, that pretty story!

[*Lays down her bonnet on table—goes to glass—takes off cap and spectacles—arranges her hair—Clarence has got on chair looking at her.*

K. By Jove! I know who it is now! Remember her as well as possible. Four years ago, when little Foxbury used to dance in the ballet over the water. *Don't* I remember her! She boxed my ears behind the scenes, by jingo! (*Coming forward.*) Miss Pemberton! Star of the ballet! Light of the harem! Don't you remember the grand Oriental ballet of the "Bulbul and the Peri?"

Miss P. Oh! (*screams.*) No, n—no, sir. You are mistaken: my name is Prior. I—never was at the "Coburg Theatre." I——

K. (*seizing her hand*). No, you don't, though! What! don't you remember well that little hand slapping this face? which nature hadn't then adorned with whiskers, by gad!

You pretend you have forgotten little Foxbury, whom Charley Calverley used to come after, and who used to drive to the "Coburg" every night in her brougham. How did you know it was the "Coburg!" That *is* a good one! *Had* you there, I think.

Miss P. Sir, in the name of Heaven, pity me! I have to keep my mother and my sisters and my brothers. When—when you saw me, we were in great poverty; and almost all the wretched earnings I made at that time were given to my poor father then lying in the Queen's Bench hard by. You know there was nothing against my character—you know there was not. Ask Captain Touchit whether I was not a good girl. It was he who brought me to this house.

K. Touchit! the old villain!

Miss P. I had your sister's confidence. I tended her abroad on her death-bed. I have brought up your nephew and niece. Ask any one if I have not been honest. As a man, as a gentleman, I entreat you to keep my secret! I implore you for the sake of my poor mother and her children! [*Kneeling.*

K. By Jove! how handsome you are! How crying becomes your eyes! Get up; get up. Of course I'll keep your secret, but——

Miss P. Ah! ah!

[*She screams as he tries to embrace her. Howell rushes in.*

Howell. Hands off, you little villain! Stir a step and I'll kill you, if you were a regiment of captains! What! insult this lady, who kept watch at your sister's death-bed and has took charge of her children! Don't be frightened, Miss Prior. Julia—dear, dear Julia—I'm by you. If the scoundrel touches you, I'll kill him. I—I love you—there—it's here—love you madly—with all my 'art—my a-heart!

Miss P. Howell—for Heaven's sake, Howell!

K. Pooh—ooh! (*Bursting with laughter.*) Here's a novel, by jingo! Here's John in love with the governess. Fond of plush, Miss Pemberton—ey? Gad, it's the best thing I ever knew. Saved a good bit, ey, Jeames? Take a public-house? By Jove! I'll buy my beer there.

John. Owe for it, you mean. I don't think your tradesmen profit much by your custom, ex-Cornet Kicklebury.

K. By Jove! I'll do for you, you villain!

John. No, not that way, Captain.

[*Struggles with and throws him.*

K. (*screams*). Hallo, Bulkeley!

[*Bulkeley is seen strolling in the garden.*

Enter BULKELEY.

Bulkeley. What is it, sir?

K. Take this confounded villain off me, and pitch him into the Thames—do you hear?

John. Come here, and I'll break every bone in your hulking body. (*To Bulkeley.*)

Bulkeley. Come, come! whathever his hall this year row about?

Miss P. For Heaven's sake, don't strike that poor man!

Bulkeley. *You* be quiet. What's he a-hittin' about my master for?

John. Take off your hat, sir, when you speak to a lady. (*Takes up a poker.*) And now come on both of you, cowards!

[*Rushes at Bulkeley and knocks his hat off his head.*

Bulkeley (*stepping back*). If you'll put down that there poker, you know, then I'll pitch into you fast enough. But that there poker ain't fair, you know.

K. You villain! of course you will leave this house. And, Miss Prior, I think you will understand that you will go too. I don't think my niece wants to learn *dancin'*, you understand. Good-bye. Here, Bulkeley! [*Gets behind footman and exit.*

Miss P. Do you know the meaning of that threat, Mr. Howell?

John. Yes, Miss Prior.

Miss P. I was a dancer once, for three months, four years ago, when my poor father was in prison.

John. Yes, Miss Prior, I knew it. And I saw you a many times.

Miss P. And you kept my secret?

John. Yes, Ju—Jul—Miss Prior.

Miss P. Thank you, and God bless you, John Howell! There, there. You mustn't! indeed, you mustn't!

John. You don't remember the printer's boy who used to come to Mr. O'Reilly, and sit in your 'all in Bury Street, Miss Prior? I was that boy. I was a country-bred boy—that is if you called Putney country, and Wimbledon Common and that.

I served the Milliken family seven year. I went with Master Horace to College, and then I revolted against service, and I thought I'd be a man and turn printer like Doctor Frankling. And I got in an office: and I went with proofs to Mr. O'Reilly, and I saw you. And though I might have been in love with somebody else before I did—yet it was all hup when I saw you.

Miss P. (*kindly*). You must not talk to me in that way, John Howell.

John. Let's tell the tale out. I couldn't stand the newspaper night-work. I had a mother and brothers and sisters to keep, as you had. I went back to Horace Milliken and said, "Sir, I've lost my work. I and mine want bread. Will you take me back again?" And he did. He's a kind kind soul is my master.

Miss P. He *is* a kind kind soul.

John. He's good to all the poor. His hand's in his pocket for everybody. Everybody takes advantage of him. His mother-in-lor rides over him. So does his ma. So do I, I may say; but that's over now; and you and I have had our notice to quit, miss, I should say.

Miss P. Yes.

John. I have saved a bit of money—not much—a hundred pound. Miss Prior—Julia—here I am—look—I'm a poor feller—a poor servant—but I've the heart of a man—and—I love you—oh! I love you!

Mary. Oh—ho—ho!

[*Mary has entered from garden, and bursts out crying.*

Miss P. It can't be, John Howell—my dear, brave, kind John Howell. It can't be. I have watched this for some time past, and poor Mary's despair here. (*Kisses Mary, who cries plentifully.*) You have the heart of a true brave man, and must show it and prove it now. I am not—am not of your—pardon me for saying so—of your class in life. I was bred by my uncle, away from my poor parents, though I came back to them after his sudden death; and to poverty, and to this dependent life I am now leading. I am a servant, like you, John, but in another sphere—have to seek another place now; and Heaven knows if I shall procure one, now that that unlucky passage in my life is known. Oh, the coward to recall it! the coward!

Mary. But John whopped him, miss! that he did. He gave it him well, John did. (*Crying.*)

Miss P. You can't—you ought not to forego an attachment

like that, John Howell. A more honest and true-hearted creature never breathed than Mary Barlow.

John. No, indeed.

Miss P. She has loved you since she was a little child. And you loved her once, and do now, John.

Mary. Oh, miss! you hare a hangel,—I hallways said you were a hangel.

Miss P. You are better than I am, my dear—much, much better than I am, John. The curse of my poverty has been that I have had to flatter and to dissemble, and hide the faults of those I wanted to help, and to smile when I was hurt, and laugh when I was sad, and to coax, and to tack, and to bide my time,—not with Mr. Milliken: he is all honour and kindness, and simplicity. Whom did *he* ever injure, or what unkind word did *he* ever say? But do you think, with the jealousy of those two ladies over his house, I could have stayed here without being a hypocrite to both of them? Go, John. My good dear friend, John Howell, marry Mary. You'll be happier with her than with me. There! There! [*They embrace.*

Mary. O—o—o! I think I'll go and hiron hout Miss Harabella's frocks now. [*Exit.*

Enter MILLIKEN *with* CLARENCE—*who is explaining things to him.*

Clarence. Here they are, I give you my word of honour. Ask 'em, damn 'em!

Milliken. What is this I hear? You, John Howell, have dared to strike a gentleman under my roof! Your master's brother-in-law?

John. Yes, by Jove! and I'd do it again.

Milliken. Are you drunk or mad, Howell?

John. I'm as sober and as sensible as ever I was in my life, sir—I not only struck the master, but I struck the man, who's twice as big, only not quite as big a coward, I think.

Milliken. Hold your scurrilous tongue, sir! My good nature ruins everybody about me. Make up your accounts. Pack your trunks—and never let me see your face again.

John. Very good, sir.

Milliken. I suppose, Miss Prior, you will also be disposed to—to follow Mr. Howell?

Miss P. To quit you, now you know what has passed? I never supposed it could be otherwise. I deceived you, Mr. Milliken, as I kept a secret from you, and must pay the penalty. It is a relief to me: the sword has been hanging over me. I wish I had told your poor wife, as I was often minded to do.

Milliken. Oh, you were minded to do it in Italy, were you?

Miss P. Captain Touchit knew it, sir, all along: and that my motives and, thank God, my life were honourable.

Milliken. Oh, Touchit knew it, did he? and thought it honourable—honourable? Ha! ha! to marry a footman—and keep a public-house? I—I beg your pardon, John Howell—I mean nothing against you, you know. You're an honourable man enough, except that you have been damned insolent to my brother-in-law.

John. Oh, Heaven!

[*Strikes his forehead, and walks away.*

Miss P. You mistake me, sir. What I wished to speak of was the fact which this gentleman has no doubt communicated to you—that I danced on the stage for three months.

Milliken. Oh, yes. Oh, damme, yes. I forgot. I wasn't thinking of that.

Kicklebury. You see she owns it.

Miss P. We were in the depths of poverty. Our furniture and lodging-house under execution—from which Captain Touchit, when he came to know of our difficulties, nobly afterwards released us. My father was in prison, and wanted shillings for medicine, and I—I went and danced on the stage.

Milliken. Well?

Miss P. And I kept the secret afterwards; knowing that I could never hope as governess to obtain a place after having been a stage-dancer.

Milliken. Of course you couldn't,—it's out of the question; and may I ask, are you going to resume that delightful profession when you enter the married state with Mr. Howell?

Miss P. Poor John! it is not I who am going to—that is, it's Mary, the schoolroom maid.

Milliken. Eternal blazes! Have you turned Mormon, John Howell, and are you going to marry the whole house?

John. I made a hass of myself about Miss Prior. I couldn't help her being l—l—ovely.

Kick. Gad, he proposed to her in my presence.

John. What I proposed to her, Cornet Clarence Kicklebury, was my heart and my honour, and my best, and my everything —and you—you wanted to take advantage of her secret, and you offered her indignities, and you laid a cowardly hand on her—a cowardly hand!—and I struck you, and I'd do it again.

Milliken. What? Is this true?

[*Turning round very fiercely to K.*

Kick. Gad! Well—I only——

Milliken. You only what? You only insulted a lady under my roof—the friend and nurse of your dead sister—the guardian of my children. You only took advantage of a defenceless girl, and would have extorted your infernal pay out of her fear. You miserable sneak and coward!

Kick. Hallo! Come, come! I say, I won't stand this sort of chaff. Dammy, I'll send a friend to you!

Milliken. Go out of that window, sir! March! or I will tell my servant, John Howell, to kick you out, you wretched little scamp! Tell that big brute,—what's-his-name?—Lady Kicklebury's man, to pack this young man's portmanteau and bear's-grease pots; and if ever you enter these doors again, Clarence Kicklebury, by the Heaven that made me!—by your sister who is dead!—I will cane your life out of your bones. Angel in heaven! Shade of my Arabella—to think that your brother in your house should be found to insult the guardian of your children!

John. By jingo, you're a good-plucked one! I knew he was, miss,—I told you he was.

[*Exit shaking hands with his master and with Miss P., and dancing for joy. Exit Clarence, scared, out of window.*

John (*without*). Bulkeley! pack up the Capting's luggage!

Milliken. How can I ask your pardon, Miss Prior? In my wife's name I ask it—in the name of that angel whose dying bed you watched and soothed—of the innocent children whom you have faithfully tended since.

Miss P. Ah, sir! it is granted when you speak so to me.

Milliken. Eh, eh—d—don't call me sir!

Miss P. It is for me to ask pardon for hiding what you know now: but if I had told you—you—you never would have taken me into your house—your wife never would.

Milliken. No, no. (*Weeping.*)

Miss P. My dear kind Captain Touchit knows it all. It was by his counsel I acted. He it was who relieved our distress. Ask him whether my conduct was not honourable—ask him whether my life was not devoted to my parents—ask him when —when I am gone.

Milliken. When you are gone, Julia! Why are you going? Why should you go, my love—that is—why need you go, in the devil's name?

Miss P. Because, when your mother—when your mother-in-law come to hear that your children's governess has been a dancer on the stage, they will send me away, and you will not have the power to resist them. They ought to send me away, sir; but I have acted honestly by the children and their poor mother. And you'll think of me kindly when—I—am—gone?

Milliken. Julia, my dearest—dear—noble—dar——the devil! here's old Kicklebury.

Enter Lady K., Children, *and* CLARENCE.

Lady K. So, Miss Prior! this is what I hear, is it? A dancer in my house! a serpent in my bosom—poisoning—yes, poisoning those blessed children! occasioning quarrels between my own son and my dearest son-in-law; flirting with the footman! When do you intend to leave, madam, the house which you have po—poll—luted?

Miss P. I need no hard language, Lady Kicklebury: and I will reply to none. I have signified to Mr. Milliken my wish to leave his house.

Milliken. Not, not if you will stay. (*To Miss P.*)

Lady K. Stay, Horace! she shall *never* stay as governess in this house!

Milliken. Julia! will you stay as mistress? You have known me for a year alone—before, not so well, when the house had a mistress that is gone. You know what my temper is, and that my tastes are simple, and my heart not unkind. I have watched you, and have never seen you out of temper, though you have been tried. I have long thought you good and beautiful, but I never thought to ask the question which I put to you now:—come in, sir! (*to Clarence at door:*)—now that you have been persecuted by those who ought to have upheld

you, and insulted by those who owed you gratitude and respect. I am tired of their domination, and as weary of a man's cowardly impertinence (*to Clarence*) as of a woman's jealous tyranny. They have made what was my Arabella's home miserable by their oppression and their quarrels. Julia! my wife's friend, my children's friend! be mine, and make me happy! Don't leave me, Julia! say you won't—say you won't—dearest—dearest girl!

Miss P. I won't—leave—you.

George (*without*). Oh, I say! Arabella, look here: here's papa a-kissing Miss Prior!

Lady K. Horace—Clarence, my son! Shade of my Arabella! can you behold this horrible scene, and not shudder in heaven? Bulkeley! Clarence! go for a doctor—go to Doctor Straight-waist at the Asylum—Horace Milliken, who has married the descendant of the Kickleburys of the Conqueror, marry a dancing-girl off the stage! Horace Milliken! do you wish to see me die in convulsions at your feet? I writhe there, I grovel there. Look! look at me on my knees; your own mother-in-law! drive away this fiend!

Milliken. Hem! I ought to thank you, Lady Kicklebury, for it is you that have given her to me.

Lady K. He won't listen! he turns away and kisses her horrible hand. This will never do. Help me up, Clarence; I must go and fetch his mother. Ah, ah! there she is, there she is!

[*Lady K. rushes out, as the top of a barouche, with Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington and Coachman, is seen over the gate.*

Mrs. B. What is this I hear, my son, my son? You are going to marry a—a stage-dancer? you are driving me mad, Horace!

Milliken. Give me my second chance, mother, to be happy. You have had yourself two chances.

Mrs. B. Speak to him, Mr. Bonnington.

[*Bonnington makes dumb show.*

Lady K. Implore him, Mr. Bonnington.

Mrs. B. Pray, pray for him, Mr. Bonnington, my love—my lost abandoned boy!

Lady K. Oh, my poor dear Mrs. Bonnington!

Mrs. B. Oh, my poor dear Lady Kicklebury!

[*They embrace each other.*

Lady K. I have been down on my knees to him, dearest Mrs. Bonnington.

Mrs. B. Let us both—both go down on our knees—I *will* (*to her husband.*) Edward, I will! (*Both ladies on their knees. Bonnington with outstretched hands behind them.*) Look, unhappy boy! look, Horace! two mothers on their wretched knees before you, imploring you to send away this monster! Speak to him, Mr. Bonnington. Edward! use authority with him, if he will not listen to his mother——

Lady K. To his mothers!

Enter TOUCHIT.

Touchit. What is this comedy going on, ladies and gentlemen? The ladies on their elderly knees—Miss Prior with her hair down her back. Is it tragedy or comedy—is it a rehearsal for a charade, or are we acting for Horace's birthday? or, oh! —I beg your Reverence's pardon—you were perhaps going to a professional duty?

Mrs. B. It's *we* who are praying this child, Touchit. This child, with whom you used to come home from Westminster when you were boys. You have influence with him; he listens to you. Entreat him to pause in his madness.

Touchit. What madness?

Mrs. B. That—that woman—that serpent yonder—that—that dancing-woman, whom you introduced to Arabella Milliken, —ah! and I rue the day:—Horace is going to mum—mum—marry her!

Touchit. Well! I always thought he would. Ever since I saw him and her playing at whist together, when I came down here a month ago, I thought he would do it.

Mrs. B. Oh, it's the whist, the whist! Why did I ever play at whist, Edward? My poor Mr. Milliken used to like his rubber.

Touchit. Since he has been a widower——

Lady K. A widower of that angel! [*Points to picture.*

Touchit. Pooh, pooh, angel! You two ladies have never given the poor fellow any peace. You were always quarrelling over him. You took possession of his house, bullied his servants, spoiled his children; you did, Lady Kicklebury.

Lady K. Sir, you are a rude, low, presuming, vulgar man. Clarence! beat this rude man!

Touchit. From what I have heard of your amiable son, he is not in the warlike line, I think. My dear Julia, I am delighted with all my heart that my old friend should have found a woman of sense, good conduct, good temper—a woman who has had many trials, and borne them with great patience—to take charge of him and make him happy. Horace, give me your hand! I knew Miss Prior in great poverty. I am sure she will bear as nobly her present good fortune; for good fortune it is to any woman to become the wife of such a loyal, honest, kindly gentleman as you are!

Enter JOHN.

John. If you please, my Lady—if you please, sir—Bulkeley——

Lady K. What of Bulkeley, sir?

John. He has packed his things, and Cornet Kicklebury's things, my Lady.

Milliken. Let the fellow go.

John. He won't go, sir, till my Lady have paid him his book and wages. Here's the book, sir!

Lady K. Insolence! quit my presence! And I, Mr. Milliken, will quit a house——

John. Shall I call your Ladyship a carriage?

Lady K. Where I have met with rudeness, cruelty, and fiendish (*to Miss P., who smiles and curtsies*)—yes, fiendish ingratitude. I will go, I say, as soon as I have made arrangements for taking other lodgings. You cannot expect a lady of fashion to turn out like a servant.

John. Hire the "Star and Garter" for her, sir. Send down to the "Castle;" anything to get rid of her. I'll tell her maid to pack her traps. Pinhorn! [*Beckons maid and gives orders.*

Touchit. You had better go at once, my dear Lady Kicklebury.

Lady K. Sir!

Touchit. The other mother-in-law is coming! I met her on the road with all her family. He! he! he! (*Screams.*)

Enter Mrs. PRIOR *and* Children.

Mrs. P. My Lady! I hope your Ladyship is quite well! Dear kind Mrs. Bonnington! I came to pay my duty to you,

ma'am. This is Charlotte, my Lady—the great girl whom your Ladyship so kindly promised the gown for; and this is my little girl, Mrs. Bonnington, ma'am, please; and this is my Bluecoat boy. Go and speak to dear kind Mr. Milliken—our best friend and protector—the son and son-in-law of these dear ladies. Look, sir! He has brought his copy to show you. (*Boy shows copy.*) Ain't it creditable to a boy of his age, Captain Touchit? And my best and most grateful services to you, sir. Julia, Julia, my dear, where's your cap and spectacles, you stupid thing? You've let your hair drop down. What! What!—— (*Begins to be puzzled.*)

Mrs. B. Is this collusion, madam?

Mrs. P. Collusion, dear Mrs. Bonnington!

Lady K. Or insolence, Mrs. Prior?

Mrs. P. Insolence, your Ladyship! What—what is it? what has happened? What's Julia's hair down for? Ah! you've not sent the poor girl away? the poor poor child, and the poor poor children!

Touchit. That dancing at the "Coburg" has come out, Mrs. Prior.

Mrs. P. Not the darling's fault. It was to help her poor father in prison. It was I who forced her to do it. Oh! don't, don't, dear Lady Kicklebury, take the bread out of the mouths of these poor orphans! (*Crying.*)

Milliken. Enough of this, Mrs. Prior: your daughter is not going away. Julia has promised to stay with me—and—never to leave me—as governess no longer, but as wife to me.

Mrs. P. Is it—is it true, Julia?

Miss P. Yes, mamma.

Mrs. P. Oh! oh! oh! (*Flings down her umbrella, kisses Julia, and running to Milliken,*) My son, my son! Come here, children. Come, Adolphus, Amelia, Charlotte—kiss your dear brother, children. What, my dears! How do you do, dears? (*To Milliken's children.*) Have they heard the news? And do you know that my daughter is going to be your mamma? There—there—go and play with your little uncles and aunts, that's good children! (*She motions off the Children, who retire towards garden. Her manner changes to one of great patronage and intense satisfaction.*) Most hot weather, your Ladyship, I'm sure. Mr. Bonnington, you must find it hot weather for preachin'! Lor'! there's that little wretch beatin' Adolphus!

George, sir! have done, sir! (*Runs to separate them.*) However shall we make those children agree, Julia?

Miss P. They have been a little spoiled, and I think Mr. Milliken will send George and Arabella to school, mamma: will you not, Horace?

Mr. Milliken. I think school will be the very best thing for them.

Mrs. P. And (*Mrs. P. whispers, pointing to her own children*) the blue room, the green room, the rooms old Lady Kick has—plenty of room for us, my dear!

Miss P. No, mamma, I think it will be too large a party,—Mr. Milliken has often said that he would like to go abroad, and I hope that now he will be able to make his tour.

Mrs. P. Oh, then! we can live in the house, you know: what's the use of payin' lodgin', my dear?

Miss P. The house is going to be painted. You had best live in your own house, mamma; and if you want anything, Horace, Mr. Milliken, I am sure, will make it comfortable for you. He has had too many visitors of late, and will like a more quiet life, I think. Will you not?

Milliken. I shall like a life with *you*, Julia.

John. Cab, sir, for her Ladyship!

Lady K. This instant let me go! Call my people. Clarence, your arm! Bulkeley, Pinhorn! Mrs. Bonnington, I wish you good-morning! Arabella, angel! (*looks at picture*) I leave you. I shall come to you ere long.

[*Exit, refusing Milliken's hand, passes up garden, with her servants following her. Mary and other servants of the house are collected together, whom Lady K. waves off. Bluecoat boy on wall eating plums. Page, as she goes, cries, Hurray, hurray! Bluecoat boy cries, Hurray! When Lady K. is gone, John advances.*

John. I think I heard you say, sir, that it was your intention to go abroad?

Milliken. Yes; oh, yes! Are we going abroad, my Julia?

Miss P. To settle matters, to have the house painted, and clear. (*Pointing to Children, Mother, &c.*) Don't you think it is the best thing that we can do?

Milliken. Surely, surely: we are going abroad. Howell, you will come with us of course, and with your experience you will make a capital courier. Won't Howell make a capital

courier, Julia? Good honest fellow, John Howell. Beg your pardon for being so rude to you just now. But my temper is very hot, very!

John (*laughing*). You are a Tartar, sir. Such a tyrant! isn't he, ma'am?

Miss P. Well, no; I don't think you have a very bad temper, Mr. Milliken, a—Horace.

John. You must—take care of him—alone, Miss Prior—Julia—I mean Mrs. Milliken. Man and boy I've waited on him this fifteen year: with the exception of that trial at the printing-office, which—which I won't talk of *now*, madam. I never knew him angry; though many a time I have known him provoked, I never knew him say a hard word, though sometimes perhaps we've deserved it. Not often—such a good master as that is pretty sure of getting a good servant—that is, if a man has a heart in his bosom; and these things are found both in and out of livery. Yes, I have been an honest servant to him, —haven't I, Mr. Milliken?

Milliken. Indeed, yes, John.

John. And so has Mary Barlow. Mary, my dear! (*Mary comes forward.*) Will you allow me to introduce you, sir, to the futur' Mrs. Howell?—if Mr. Bonnington does *your* little business for you, as I dare say (*turning to Mr. B.*), hold gov'nor, you will!—Make it up with your poor son, Mrs. Bonnington, ma'am. You have took a second 'elpmate, why shouldn't Master Horace? (*To Mrs. B.*) He—he wants somebody to help him, and take care of him, more than you do.

Touchit. You never spoke a truer word in your life, Howell.

John. It's my general 'abit, Capting, to indulge in them sort of statements. A true friend I have been to my master, and a true friend I'll remain when he's my master no more.

Milliken. Why, John, you are not going to leave me?

John. It's best, sir, I should go. I—I'm not fit to be a servant in this house any longer. I wish to sit in my own little home, with my own little wife by my side. Poor dear! you've no conversation, Mary, but you're a good little soul. We've saved a hundred pound apiece, and if we want more, I know who won't grudge it us, a good feller—a good master—for whom I've saved many a hundred pound myself, and will take the "Milliken Arms" at old Pigeoncot—and once a year or so, at this hanniversary, we will pay our respects to you, sir, and

madam. Perhaps we will bring some children with us, perhaps we will find some more in this villa. Bless 'em beforehand! Good-bye, sir, and madam—come away, Mary! [*Going.*

Mrs. P. (*entering with clothes, &c.*) She has not left a single thing in her room. Amelia, come here! this cloak will do capital for you, and this—this garment is the very thing for Adolphus. Oh, John! eh, Howell! will you please to see that my children have something to eat, immediately! The Milliken children, I suppose, have dined already?

John. Yes, ma'am: certainly, ma'am.

Mrs. P. I see he is inclined to be civil to me *now!*

Miss P. John Howell is about to leave us, mamma. He is engaged to Mary Barlow, and when we go away, he is going to set up housekeeping for himself. Good-bye, and thank you, John Howell (*gives her hand to John, but with great reserve of manner*). You have been a kind and true friend to us—if ever we can serve you, count upon us—may he not, Mr. Milliken?

Milliken. Always, always.

Miss P. But you will still wait upon us—upon Mr. Milliken, for a day or two, won't you, John? until we—until Mr. Milliken has found some one to replace you. He will never find any one more honest than you, and good kind little Mary. Thank you, Mary, for your goodness to the poor governess.

Mary. Oh, miss! oh, mum!

[*Miss P. kisses Mary patronisingly.*

Miss P. (*to John*). And after they have had some refreshment, get a cab for my brothers and sisters, if you please, John. Don't you think that will be best, my—my dear?

Milliken. Of course, of course, dear Julia!

Miss P. And, Captain Touchit, you will stay, I hope, and dine with Mr. Milliken? And, Mrs. Bonnington, if you will receive as a daughter one who has always had a sincere regard for you, I think you will aid in making your son happy, as I promise you with all my heart and all my life to endeavour to do. [*Miss P. and M. go up to Mrs. Bonnington.*

Mrs. Bonnington. Well, there then, since it must be so, bless you, my children!

Touchit. Spoken like a sensible woman! And now, as I do not wish to interrupt this felicity, I will go and dine at the "Star and Garter."

Miss P. My dear Captain Touchit, not for worlds! Don't you know I mustn't be alone with Mr. Milliken until—until——

Milliken. Until I am made the happiest man alive! And you will come down and see us often, Touchit, won't you? And we hope to see our friends here often. And we will have a little life and spirit and gaiety in the place. Oh, mother! oh, George! oh, Julia! what a comfort it is to me to think that I am released from the tyranny of that terrible mother-in-law!

Mrs. Prior. Come in to your teas, children. Come this moment, I say.

[*The Children pass, quarrelling, behind the characters, Mrs. Prior summoning them; John and Mary standing on each side of the dining-room door as the curtain falls.*

END OF "THE WOLVES AND THE LAMB."

NOTES OF A JOURNEY

FROM

CORNHILL TO GRAND CAIRO;

BY WAY OF

LISBON, ATHENS, CONSTANTINOPLE, AND JERUSALEM:

PERFORMED IN THE STEAMERS OF THE PENINSULAR

AND ORIENTAL COMPANY.

TO

CAPTAIN SAMUEL LEWIS,

OF THE

PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY'S SERVICE.

My dear Lewis,

After a voyage, during which the captain of the ship has displayed uncommon courage, seamanship, affability, or other good qualities, grateful passengers often present him with a token of their esteem, in the shape of teapots, tankards, trays, &c., of precious metal. Among authors, however, bullion is a much rarer commodity than paper, whereof I beg you to accept a little in the shape of this small volume. It contains a few notes of a voyage which your skill and kindness rendered doubly pleasant; and of which I don't think there is any recollection more agreeable than that it was the occasion of making your friendship.

If the noble Company in whose service you command (and whose fleet alone makes them a third-rate maritime power in Europe) should appoint a few admirals in their navy, I hope to hear that your flag is hoisted on board one of the grandest of their steamers. But, I trust, even there you will not forget the "Iberia," and the delightful Mediterranean cruise we had in her in the Autumn of 1844.

Most faithfully yours,

My dear Lewis,

W. M. THACKERAY.

London, *December* 24, 1845.

PREFACE.

ON the 20th of August, 1844, the writer of this little book went to dine at the —— Club, quite unconscious of the wonderful events which Fate had in store for him.

Mr. William was there, giving a farewell dinner to his friend Mr. James (now Sir James). These two asked Mr. Titmarsh to join company with them, and the conversation naturally fell upon the tour Mr. James was about to take. The Peninsular and Oriental Company had arranged an excursion in the Mediterranean, by which, in the space of a couple of months, as many men and cities were to be seen as Ulysses surveyed and noted in ten years. Malta, Athens, Smyrna, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo were to be visited, and everybody was to be back in London by Lord Mayor's Day.

The idea of beholding these famous places inflamed Mr. Titmarsh's mind; and the charms of such a journey were eloquently impressed upon him by Mr. James. "Come," said that kind and hospitable gentleman, "and make one of my family party; in all your life you will never probably have a chance again to see so much in so short a time. Consider—it is as easy as a journey to Paris or to Baden." Mr. Titmarsh considered all these things; but also the difficulties of the situation: he had but six-and-thirty hours to get ready for so portentous a journey—he had engagements at home—finally, could he afford it? In spite of these objections, however, with every glass of claret the enthusiasm somehow rose, and the difficulties vanished.

But when Mr. James, to crown all, said he had no doubt that his friends, the Directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, would make Mr. Titmarsh the present of a berth

for the voyage, all objections ceased on his part: to break his outstanding engagements—to write letters to his amazed family, stating that they were not to expect him at dinner on Saturday fortnight, as he would be at Jerusalem on that day—to purchase eighteen shirts and lay in a sea stock of Russia ducks,—was the work of four-and-twenty hours; and on the 22nd of August, the "Lady Mary Wood" was sailing from Southampton with the "subject of the present memoir," quite astonished to find himself one of the passengers on board.

These important statements are made partly to convince some incredulous friends—who insist still that the writer never went abroad at all, and wrote the following pages, out of pure fancy, in retirement at Putney; but mainly, to give him an opportunity of thanking the Directors of the company in question for a delightful excursion.

It was one so easy, so charming, and I think profitable—it leaves such a store of pleasant recollections for after days—and creates so many new sources of interest (a newspaper letter from Beyrout, or Malta, or Algiers, has twice the interest now that it had formerly),—that I can't but recommend all persons who have time and means to make a similar journey—vacation idlers to extend their travels and pursue it: above all, young well-educated men entering life, to take this course, we will say, after that at college; and, having their book-learning fresh in their minds, see the living people and their cities, and the actual aspect of Nature, along the famous shores of the Mediterranean.

A JOURNEY

FROM

CORNHILL TO CAIRO.

CHAPTER I.

Vigo.

THE sun brought all the sick people out of their berths this morning, and the indescribable moans and noises which had been issuing from behind the fine painted doors on each side of the cabin happily ceased. Long before sunrise, I had the good fortune to discover that it was no longer necessary to maintain the horizontal posture, and, the very instant this truth was apparent, came on deck, at two o'clock in the morning, to see a noble full moon sinking westward, and millions of the most brilliant stars shining overhead. The night was so serenely pure, that you saw them in magnificent airy perspective; the blue sky around and over them, and other more distant orbs sparkling above, till they glittered away faintly into the immeasurable distance. The ship went rolling over a heavy, sweltering, calm sea. The breeze was a warm and soft one, quite different to the rigid air we had left behind us, two days since, off the Isle of Wight. The bell kept tolling its half-hours, and the mate explained the mystery of watch and dog-watch.

The sight of that noble scene cured all the woes and discomfitures of sea-sickness at once, and if there were any need to communicate such secrets to the public, one might tell of much more good that the pleasant morning-watch effected; but there are a set of emotions about which a man had best be shy of talking lightly,—and the feelings excited by contemplating this

vast, magnificent, harmonious Nature are among these. The view of it inspires a delight and ecstacy which is not only hard to describe, but which has something secret in it that a man should not utter loudly. Hope, memory, humility, tender yearnings towards dear friends, and inexpressible love and reverence towards the Power which created the infinite universe blazing above eternally, and the vast ocean shining and rolling around—fill the heart with a solemn humble happiness, that a person dwelling in a city has rarely occasion to enjoy. They are coming away from London parties at this time: the dear little eyes are closed in sleep under mother's wing. How far off city cares and pleasures appear to be! how small and mean they seem, dwindling out of sight before this magnificent brightness of Nature! But the best thoughts only grow and strengthen under it. Heaven shines above, and the humble spirit looks up reverently towards that boundless aspect of wisdom and beauty. You are at home, and with all at rest there, however far away they may be; and through the distance the heart broods over them, bright and wakeful like yonder peaceful stars overhead.

The day was as fine and calm as the night; at seven bells, suddenly a bell began to toll very much like that of a country church, and on going on deck we found an awning raised, a desk with a flag flung over it close to the compass, and the ship's company and passengers assembled there to hear the captain read the Service in a manly respectful voice. This, too, was a novel and touching sight to me. Peaked ridges of purple mountains rose to the left of the ship,—Finisterre and the coast of Galicia. The sky above was cloudless and shining; the vast dark ocean smiled peacefully round about, and the ship went rolling over it, as the people within were praising the Maker of all.

In honour of the day, it was announced that the passengers would be regaled with champagne at dinner; and accordingly that exhilarating liquor was served out in decent profusion, the company drinking the captain's health with the customary orations of compliment and acknowledgment. This feast was scarcely ended, when we found ourselves rounding the headland into Vigo Bay, passing a grim and tall island of rocky mountains which lies in the centre of the bay.

Whether it is that the sight of land is always welcome to

weary mariners, after the perils and annoyances of a voyage of three days, or whether the place is in itself extraordinarily beautiful, need not be argued; but I have seldom seen anything more charming than the amphitheatre of noble hills into which the ship now came—all the features of the landscape being lighted up with a wonderful clearness of air, which rarely adorns a view in our country. The sun had not yet set, but over the town and lofty rocky castle of Vigo a great ghost of a moon was faintly visible, which blazed out brighter and brighter as

the superior luminary retired behind the purple mountains of the headland to rest. Before the general background of waving heights which encompassed the bay, rose a second semicircle of undulating hills, as cheerful and green as the mountains behind them were grey and solemn. Farms and gardens, convent towers, white villages and churches, and buildings that no doubt were hermitages once, upon the sharp peaks of the hills, shone brightly in the sun. The sight was delightfully cheerful, animated, and pleasing.

Presently the captain roared out the magic words, "Stop her!" and the obedient vessel come to a stand-still, at some three hundred yards from the little town, with its white houses clambering up a rock, defended by the superior mountain whereon the castle stands. Numbers of people, arrayed in various brilliant colours of red, were standing on the sand close by the tumbling, shining, purple waves: and there we beheld, for the first time, the Royal red and yellow standard of Spain floating on its own ground, under the guardianship of a light blue sentinel, whose musket glittered in the sun. Numerous boats were seen, incontinently, to put off from the little shore.

And now our attention was withdrawn from the land to a sight of great splendour on board. This was Lieutenant Bundy, the guardian of Her Majesty's mails, who issued from his cabin in his long swallow-tailed coat with anchor buttons; his sabre clattering between his legs; a magnificent shirt-collar, of several inches in height, rising round his good-humoured sallow face; and above it a cocked hat, that shone so, I thought it was made of polished tin (it may have been that or oilskin), handsomely laced with black worsted, and ornamented with a shining gold cord. A little squat boat, rowed by three ragged gallegos, came bouncing up to the ship. Into this Mr. Bundy and Her Majesty's Royal mail embarked with much majesty; and in the twinkling of an eye, the Royal standard of England, about the size of a pocket-handkerchief,—and at the bows of the boat, the man-of-war's pennant, being a strip of bunting considerably under the value of a farthing,—streamed out.

"They know that flag, sir," said the good-natured old tar, quite solemnly, in the evening afterwards: "they respect it, sir." The authority of Her Majesty's lieutenant on board the steamer is stated to be so tremendous, that he may order it to stop, to move, to go larboard, starboard, or what you will; and the captain dare only disobey him *suo periculo*.

It was agreed that a party of us should land for half-an-hour, and taste real Spanish chocolate on Spanish ground. We followed Lieutenant Bundy, but humbly in the providor's boat; that officer going on shore to purchase fresh eggs, milk for tea (in place of the slimy substitute of whipped yolk of egg which we had been using for our morning and evening meals), and, if possible, oysters, for which it is said the rocks of Vigo are famous.

It was low tide, and the boat could not get up to the dry shore. Hence it was necessary to take advantage of the offers of sundry gallegos, who rushed barelegged into the water, to land on their shoulders. The approved method seems to be, to sit upon one shoulder only, holding on by the porter's whiskers; and though some of our party were of the tallest and fattest men whereof our race is composed, and their living sedans exceedingly meagre and small, yet all were landed without accident upon the juicy sand, and forthwith surrounded by a host of mendicants, screaming, "I say, sir! penny, sir! I say, English! tam your ays! penny!" in all voices, from extreme youth to the most lousy and venerable old age. When it is said that these beggars were as ragged as those of Ireland, and still more voluble, the Irish traveller will be able to form an opinion of their capabilities.

Through this crowd we passed up some steep rocky steps, through a little low gate, where, in a little guard-house and barrack, a few dirty little sentinels were keeping a dirty little guard; and by low-roofed whitewashed houses, with balconies, and women in them,—the very same women, with the very same head-clothes, and yellow fans and eyes, at once sly and solemn, which Murillo painted,—by a neat church into which we took a peep, and, finally, into the Plaza del Constitucion, or *grand place* of the town, which may be about as big as that pleasing square, Pump Court, Temple. We were taken to an inn, of which I forget the name, and were shown from one chamber and storey to another, till we arrived at that apartment where the real Spanish chocolate was finally to be served out. All these rooms were as clean as scrubbing and whitewash could make them; with simple French prints (with Spanish titles) on the walls; a few rickety half-finished articles of furniture; and, finally, an air of extremely respectable poverty. A jolly, black-eyed, yellow-shawled Dulcinea conducted us through the apartment, and provided us with the desired refreshment.

Sounds of clarions drew our eyes to the Place of the Constitution; and, indeed, I had forgotten to say, that that majestic square was filled with military, with exceedingly small firelocks, the men ludicrously young and diminutive for the most part, in a uniform at once cheap and tawdry,—like those supplied to the warriors at Astley's, or from still humbler thea-

trical wardrobes: indeed, the whole scene was just like that of a little theatre; the houses curiously small, with arcades and balconies, out of which looked women apparently a great deal too big for the chambers they inhabited; the warriors were in ginghams, cottons, and tinsel; the officers had huge epaulets of sham silver lace drooping over their bosoms, and looked as if they were attired at a very small expense. Only the general —the captain-general (Pooch, they told us, was his name: I know not how 'tis written in Spanish)—was well got up, with a smart hat, a real feather, huge stars glittering on his portly chest, and tights and boots of the first order. Presently, after a good deal of trumpeting, the little men marched off the place, Pooch and his staff coming into the very inn in which we were awaiting our chocolate.

Then we had an opportunity of seeing some of the civilians of the town. Three or four ladies passed, with fan and mantle; to them came three or four dandies, dressed smartly in the French fashion, with strong Jewish physiognomies. There was one, a solemn lean fellow in black, with his collars extremely turned over, and holding before him a long ivory-tipped ebony cane, who tripped along the little place with a solemn smirk, which gave one an indescribable feeling of the truth of "Gil Blas," and of those delightful bachelors and licentiates who have appeared to us all in our dreams.

In fact we were but half-an-hour in this little queer Spanish town; and it appeared like a dream, too, or a little show got up to amuse us. Boom! the gun fired at the end of the funny little entertainment. The women and the balconies, the beggars and the walking Murillos, Pooch and the little soldiers in tinsel, disappeared, and were shut up in their box again. Once more we were carried on the beggars' shoulders out off the shore, and we found ourselves again in the great stalwart roast-beef world; the stout British steamer bearing out of the bay, whose purple waters had grown more purple. The sun had set by this time, and the moon above was twice as big and bright as our degenerate moons are.

The providor had already returned with his fresh stores, and Bundy's tin hat was popped into its case, and he walking the deck of the packet denuded of tails. As we went out of the bay, occurred a little incident with which the great incidents of

the day may be said to wind up. We saw before us a little vessel, tumbling and plunging about in the dark waters of the bay, with a bright light beaming from the mast. It made for us at about a couple of miles from the town, and came close up, flouncing and bobbing in the very jaws of the paddle, which looked as if it would have seized and twirled round that little boat and its light, and destroyed them for ever and ever. All the passengers, of course, came crowding to the ship's side to look at the bold little boat.

"I SAY!" howled a man; "I say!—a word!—I say! Pasagero! Pasagero! Pasage-e-ero!" We were two hundred yards ahead by this time.

"Go on," says the captain.

"You may stop if you like," says Lieutenant Bundy, exerting his tremendous responsibility. It is evident that the lieutenant has a soft heart, and felt for the poor devil in the boat who was howling so piteously "Pasagero!"

But the captain was resolute. His duty was *not* to take the man up. He was evidently an irregular customer—some one trying to escape, possibly.

The lieutenant turned away, but did not make any further hints. The captain was right; but we all felt somehow disappointed, and looked back wistfully at the little boat, jumping up and down far astern now; the poor little light shining in vain, and the poor wretch within screaming out in the most heart-rending accents a last faint desperate "I say! Pasagero-o!"

We all went down to tea rather melancholy; but the new milk, in the place of that abominable whipped egg, revived us again; and so ended the great events on board the "Lady Mary Wood" steamer, on the 25th August 1844.

CHAPTER II.

Lisbon—Cadiz.

A GREAT misfortune which befalls a man who has but a single day to stay in a town, is that fatal duty which superstition entails upon him of visiting the chief lions of the city in which he may happen to be. You must go through the ceremony, however much you may sigh to avoid it; and however much

you know that the lions in one capital roar very much like the lions in another; that the churches are more or less large and splendid, the palaces pretty spacious, all the world over; and that there is scarcely a capital city in this Europe but has its pompous bronze statue or two of some periwigged, hook-nosed emperor, in a Roman habit, waving his bronze bâton on his broad-flanked brazen charger. We only saw these state old lions in Lisbon, whose roar has long since ceased to frighten one. First we went to the Church of St. Roch, to see a famous piece of mosaic-work there. It is a famous work of art, and was bought by I don't know what king for I don't know how much money. All this information may be perfectly relied on, though the fact is, we did not see the mosaic-work: the sacristan, who guards it, was yet in bed; and it was veiled from our eyes in a side-chapel by great dirty damask curtains, which could not be removed, except when the sacristan's toilette was done, and at the price of a dollar. So we were spared this mosaic exhibition; and I think I always feel relieved when such an event occurs. I feel I have done my duty in coming to see the enormous animal: if he is not at home, *virtute meâ me*, &c.—we have done our best, and mortal can do no more.

In order to reach that church of the forbidden mosaic, we had sweated up several most steep and dusty streets—hot and dusty, although it was but nine o'clock in the morning. Thence the guide conducted us into some little dust-powdered gardens, in which the people make-believe to enjoy the verdure, and whence you look over a great part of the arid, dreary, stony city. There was no smoke, as in honest London, only dust—dust over the gaunt houses and the dismal yellow strips of gardens. Many churches were there, and tall half-baked-looking public edifices, that had a dry, uncomfortable, earthquaky look, to my idea. The ground-floors of the spacious houses by which we passed seemed the coolest and pleasantest portions of the mansion. They were cellars or warehouses, for the most part, in which white-jacketed clerks sat smoking easy cigars. The streets were plastered with placards of a bull-fight, to take place the next evening (there was no opera that season); but it was not a real Spanish tauromachy—only a theatrical combat, as you could see by the picture in which the horseman was cantering off at three miles an hour, the bull tripping after him with tips to his gentle horns. Mules interminable, and almost

all excellently sleek and handsome, were pacing down every street: here and there, but later in the day, came clattering along a smart rider on a prancing Spanish horse; and in the afternoon a few families might be seen in the queerest old-fashioned little carriages, drawn by their jolly mules and swinging between, or rather before, enormous wheels.

The churches I saw were of the florid periwig architecture —I mean of that pompous cauliflower kind of ornament which was the fashion in Louis the Fifteenth's time, at which unlucky period a building mania seems to have seized upon many of the monarchs of Europe, and innumerable public edifices were erected. It seems to me to have been the period in all history when society was the least natural, and perhaps the most dissolute; and I have always fancied that the bloated artificial forms of the architecture partake of the social disorganisation of the time. Who can respect a simpering ninny, grinning in a Roman dress and a full-bottomed wig, who is made to pass off for a hero? or a fat woman in a hoop, and of a most doubtful virtue, who leers at you as a goddess? In the palaces which we saw, several Court allegories were represented, which, atrocious as they were in point of art, might yet serve to attract the regard of the moraliser. There were Faith, Hope, and Charity restoring Don John to the arms of his happy Portugal: there were Virtue, Valour, and Victory saluting Don Emanuel: Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic (for what I know, or some mythologic nymphs) dancing before Don Miguel—the picture is there still, at the Ajuda; and ah me! where is poor Mig? Well, it is these State lies and ceremonies that we persist in going to see; whereas a man would have a much better insight into Portuguese manners, by planting himself at a corner, like yonder beggar, and watching the real transactions of the day.

A drive to Belem is the regular route practised by the traveller who has to make only a short stay, and accordingly a couple of carriages were provided for our party, and we were driven through the long merry street of Belem, peopled by endless strings of mules,—by thousands of gallegos, with water-barrels on their shoulders, or lounging by the fountains to hire,—by the Lisbon and Belem omnibuses, with four mules, jingling along at a good pace; and it seemed to me to present a far more lively and cheerful, though not so regular, an appearance as the stately quarters of the city we had left behind us. The

little shops were at full work—the men brown, well-dressed, manly, and handsome: so much cannot, I am sorry to say, be said for the ladies, of whom, with every anxiety to do so, our party could not perceive a single good-looking specimen all day. The noble blue Tagus accompanies you all along these three miles of busy pleasant street, whereof the chief charm, as I thought, was its look of genuine business—that appearance of comfort which the cleverest Court-architect never knows how to give.

The carriages (the canvas one with four seats and the chaise in which I drove) were brought suddenly up to a gate with the Royal arms over it; and here we were introduced to as queer an exhibition as the eye has often looked on. This was the state-carriage house, where there is a museum of huge old tumble-down gilded coaches of the last century, lying here, mouldy and dark, in a sort of limbo. The gold has vanished from the great lumbering old wheels and panels; the velvets are woefully tarnished. When one thinks of the patches and powder that have simpered out of those plate-glass windows—the mitred bishops, the big-wigged marshals, the shovel-hatted abbés which they have borne in their time—the human mind becomes affected in no ordinary degree. Some human minds heave a sigh for the glories of bygone days; while others, considering rather the lies and humbug, the vice and servility, which went framed and glazed and enshrined, creaking along in those old Juggernaut cars, with fools worshipping under the wheels, console themselves for the decay of institutions that may have been splendid and costly, but were ponderous, clumsy, slow, and unfit for daily wear. The guardian of these defunct old carriages tells some prodigious fibs concerning them: he pointed out one carriage that was six hundred years old in his calendar; but any connoisseur in bric-à-brac can see it was built at Paris in the Regent Orleans' time.

Hence it is but a step to an institution in full life and vigour,—a noble orphan-school for one thousand boys and girls, founded by Don Pedro, who gave up to its use the superb convent of Belem, with its splendid cloisters, vast airy dormitories, and magnificent church. Some Oxford gentlemen would have wept to see the desecrated edifice,—to think that the shaven polls and white gowns were banished from it to give place to a thousand children, who have not even the clergy to instruct

them. "Every lad here may choose his trade," our little informant said, who addressed us in better French than any of our party spoke, whose manners were perfectly gentlemanlike and respectful, and whose clothes, though of a common cotton stuff, were cut and worn with a military neatness and precision. All the children whom we remarked were dressed with similar neatness, and it was a pleasure to go through their various rooms for study, where some were busy at mathematics, some at drawing, some attending a lecture on tailoring, while others were sitting at the feet of a professor of the science of shoemaking. All the garments of the establishment were made by the pupils; even the deaf and dumb were drawing and reading, and the blind were, for the most part, set to perform on musical instruments, and got up a concert for the visitors. It was then we wished ourselves of the numbers of the deaf and dumb, for the poor fellows made noises so horrible, that even as blind beggars they could hardly get a livelihood in the musical way.

Hence we were driven to the huge palace of Necessidades, which is but a wing of a building that no King of Portugal ought ever to be rich enough to complete, and which, if perfect, might outvie the Tower of Babel. The mines of Brazil must have been productive of gold and silver indeed when the founder imagined this enormous edifice. From the elevation on which it stands it commands the noblest views,—the city is spread before it, with its many churches and towers, and for many miles you see the magnificent Tagus, rolling by banks crowned with trees and towers. But to arrive at this enormous building you have to climb a steep suburb of wretched huts, many of them with dismal gardens of dry cracked earth, where a few reedy sprouts of Indian corn seemed to be the chief cultivation, and which were guarded by huge plants of spiky aloes, on which the rags of the proprietors of the huts were sunning themselves. The terrace before the palace was similarly encroached upon by these wretched habitations. A few millions judiciously expended might make of this arid hill one of the most magnificent gardens in the world; and the palace seems to me to excel for situation any Royal edifice I have ever seen. But the huts of these swarming poor have crawled up close to its gates,—the superb walls of hewn stone stop all of a sudden with a lath-

and-plaster *hitch;* and capitals, and hewn stones for columns, still lying about on the deserted terrace, may lie there for ages to come, probably, and never take their places by the side of their brethren in yonder tall bankrupt galleries. The air of this pure sky has little effect upon the edifices,—the edges of the stone look as sharp as if the builders had just left their work; and close to the grand entrance stands an outbuilding, part of which may have been burnt fifty years ago, but is in such

cheerful preservation that you might fancy the fire had occurred yesterday. It must have been an awful sight from this hill to have looked at the city spread before it, and seen it reeling and swaying in the time of the earthquake. I thought it looked so hot and shaky, that one might fancy a return of the fit. In several places still remain gaps and chasms, and ruins lie here and there as they cracked and fell.

Although the palace has not attained anything like its full growth, yet what exists is quite big enough for the monarch

of such a little country; and Versailles or Windsor has not apartments more nobly proportioned. The Queen resides in the Ajuda, a building of much less pretensions, of which the yellow walls and beautiful gardens are seen between Belem and the city. The Necessidades are only used for grand galas, receptions of ambassadors, and ceremonies of state. In the throne-room is a huge throne, surmounted by an enormous gilt crown, than which I have never seen anything larger in the finest pantomime at Drury Lane; but the effect of this splendid piece is lessened by a shabby old Brussels carpet, almost the only other article of furniture in the apartment, and not quite large enough to cover its spacious floor. The looms of Kidderminster have supplied the web which ornaments the "Ambassadors Waiting-Room," and the ceilings are painted with huge allegories in distemper, which pretty well correspond with the other furniture. Of all the undignified objects in the world, a palace out at elbows is surely the meanest. Such places ought not to be seen in adversity,—splendour is their decency,—and when no longer able to maintain it, they should sink to the level of their means, calmly subside into manufactories, or go shabby in seclusion.

There is a picture-gallery belonging to the palace that is quite of a piece with the furniture, where are the mythological pieces relative to the kings before alluded to, and where the English visitor will see some astonishing pictures of the Duke of Wellington, done in a very characteristic style of Portuguese art. There is also a chapel, which has been decorated with much care and sumptuousness of ornament,—the altar surmounted by a ghastly and horrible carved figure in the taste of the time when faith was strengthened by the shrieks of Jews on the rack, and enlivened by the roasting of heretics. Other such frightful images may be seen in the churches of the city; those which we saw were still rich, tawdry, and splendid to outward show, although the French, as usual, had robbed their shrines of their gold and silver, and the statues of their jewels and crowns. But brass and tinsel look to the visitor full as well at a little distance,—as doubtless Soult and Junot thought, when they despoiled these places of worship, like French philosophers as they were.

A friend, with a classical turn of mind, was bent upon seeing the aqueduct, whither we went on a dismal excursion

of three hours, in the worst carriages, over the most diabolical clattering roads, up and down dreary parched hills, on which grew a few grey olive-trees and many aloes. When we arrived, the gate leading to the aqueduct was closed, and we were entertained with a legend of some respectable character who had made a good livelihood there for some time past lately, having a private key to this very aqueduct, and lying in wait there for unwary travellers like ourselves, whom he pitched down the arches into the ravines below, and there robbed them at leisure. So that all we saw was the door and the tall arches of the aqueduct, and by the time we returned to town it was time to go on board the ship again. If the inn at which we had sojourned was not of the best quality, the bill, at least, would have done honour to the first establishment in London. We all left the house of entertainment joyfully, glad to get out of the sun-burnt city and go *home*. Yonder in the steamer was home, with its black funnel and gilt portraiture of "Lady Mary Wood" at the bows; and every soul on board felt glad to return to the friendly little vessel. But the authorities of Lisbon, however, are very suspicious of the departing stranger, and we were made to lie an hour in the river before the Sanita boat, where a passport is necessary to be procured before the traveller can quit the country. Boat after boat laden with priests and peasantry, with handsome red-sashed gallegos clad in brown, and ill-favoured women, came and got their permits, and were off, as we lay bumping up against the old hull of the Sanita boat; but the officers seemed to take a delight in keeping us there bumping, looked at us quite calmly over the ship's sides, and smoked their cigars without the least attention to the prayers which we shrieked out for release.

If we were glad to get away from Lisbon, we were quite as sorry to be obliged to quit Cadiz, which we reached the next night, and where we were allowed a couple of hours' leave to land and look about. It seemed as handsome within as it is stately without; the long narrow streets of an admirable cleanliness, many of the tall houses of rich and noble decorations, and all looking as if the city were in full prosperity. I have seen no more cheerful and animated sight than the long street leading from the quay where we were landed, and the market blazing in sunshine, piled with fruit, fish, and poultry,

under many-coloured awnings; the tall white houses with their balconies and galleries shining round about, and the sky above so blue that the best cobalt in all the paint-box looks muddy and dim in comparison to it. There were pictures for a year in that market-place—from the copper-coloured old hags and beggars who roared to you for the love of Heaven to give money, to the swaggering dandies of the market, with red sashes and tight clothes, looking on superbly, with a hand on the hip and a cigar in the mouth. These must be the chief critics at the great bull-fight house yonder by the Alameda, with its scanty trees, and cool breezes facing the water. Nor are there any corks to the bulls' horns here, as at Lisbon. A small old English guide who seized upon me the moment my foot was on shore, had a store of agreeable legends regarding the bulls, men, and horses that had been killed with unbounded profusion in the late entertainments which have taken place.

It was so early an hour in the morning that the shops were scarcely opened as yet; the churches, however, stood open for the faithful, and we met scores of women tripping towards them with pretty feet, and smart black mantillas, from which looked out fine dark eyes and handsome pale faces, very different from the coarse brown countenances we had seen at Lisbon. A very handsome modern cathedral, built by the present bishop at his own charges, was the finest of the public edifices we saw; it was not, however, nearly so much frequented as another little church, crowded with altars and fantastic ornaments, and lights and gilding, where we were told to look behind a huge iron grille, and beheld a bevy of black nuns kneeling. Most of the good ladies in the front ranks stopped their devotions, and looked at the strangers with as much curiosity as we directed at them through the gloomy bars of their chapel. The men's convents are closed; that which contains the famous Murillos has been turned into an academy of the fine arts; but the English guide did not think the pictures were of sufficient interest to detain strangers, and so hurried us back to the shore, and grumbled at only getting three shillings at parting for his trouble and his information. And so our residence in Andalusia began and ended before breakfast, and we went on board and steamed for Gibraltar, looking, as we passed, at Joinville's black squadron, and the white houses of St. Mary's across the bay, with the hills of Medina Sidonia and Granada lying purple

beyond them. There's something even in those names which is pleasant to write down; to have passed only two hours in Cadiz is something—to have seen real donnas with comb and mantle—real caballeros with cloak and cigar—real Spanish barbers lathering out of brass basins—and to have heard guitars under the balconies: there was one that an old beggar was jangling in the market, whilst a huge leering fellow in bushy whiskers and a faded velvet dress came singing and jumping after our party,—not singing to a guitar, it is true, but imitating one capitally with his voice, and cracking his fingers by way of castanets, and performing a dance such as Figaro or Lablache might envy. How clear that fellow's voice thrums on the ear even now; and how bright and pleasant remains the recollection of the fine city and the blue sea, and the Spanish flags floating on the boats that danced over it, and Joinville's band beginning to play stirring marches as we puffed out of the bay.

The next stage was Gibraltar, where we were to change horses. Before sunset we skirted along the dark savage mountains of the African coast, and came to the Rock just before gun-fire. It is the very image of an enormous lion, crouched between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and set there to guard the passage for its British mistress. The next British lion is Malta, four days further on in the Midland Sea, and ready to spring upon Egypt or pounce upon Syria, or roar so as to be heard at Marseilles in case of need.

To the eyes of the civilian the first-named of these famous fortifications is by far the most imposing. The Rock looks so tremendous, that to ascend it, even without the compliment of shells or shot, seems a dreadful task—what would it be when all those mysterious lines of batteries were vomiting fire and brimstone; when all those dark guns that you see poking their grim heads out of every imaginable cleft and zigzag should salute you with shot, both hot and cold; and when, after tugging up the hideous perpendicular place, you were to find regiments of British grenadiers ready to plunge bayonets into your poor panting stomach, and let out artificially the little breath left there? It is a marvel to think that soldiers will mount such places for a shilling—ensigns for five and ninepence—a day: a cabman would ask double the money to go half way! One meekly reflects upon the above strange truths,

leaning over the ship's side, and looking up the huge mountain, from the tower nestled at the foot of it to the thin flagstaff at the summit, up to which have been piled the most ingenious edifices for murder Christian science ever adopted. My hobby-horse is a quiet beast, suited for Park riding, or a gentle trot to Putney and back to a snug stable, and plenty of feeds of corn:—it can't abide climbing hills, and is not at all used to gunpowder. Some men's animals are so spirited that the very appearance of a stone-wall sets them jumping at it: regular chargers of hobbies, which snort and say "Ha, ha!" at the mere notion of a battle.

CHAPTER III.

The "Lady Mary Wood."

OUR week's voyage is now drawing to a close. We have just been to look at Cape Trafalgar, shining white over the finest blue sea. (We, who were looking at Trafalgar Square only the other day!) The sight of that cape must have disgusted Joinville and his fleet of steamers, as they passed yesterday into Cadiz bay, and to-morrow will give them a sight of St. Vincent.

One of their steam-vessels has been lost off the coast of Africa; they were obliged to burn her, lest the Moors should take possession of her. She was a virgin vessel, just out of Brest. Poor innocent!. to die in the very first month of her union with the noble whiskered god of war!

We Britons on board the English boat received the news of the "Groenenland's" abrupt demise with grins of satisfaction. It was a sort of national compliment, and cause of agreeable congratulation. "The lubbers!" we said; "the clumsy humbugs! there's none but Britons to rule the waves!" and we gave ourselves piratical airs, and went down presently and were sick in our little buggy berths. It was pleasant, certainly, to laugh at Joinville's admiral's flag floating at his foremast, in yonder black ship, with its two thundering great guns at the bows and stern, its busy crew swarming on the deck, and a crowd of obsequious shore-boats bustling round the vessel—and to sneer at the Mogador warrior, and vow

that we English, had we been inclined to do the business would have performed it a great deal better.

Now yesterday at Lisbon we saw H.M.S. "Caledonia." *This*, on the contrary, inspired us with feelings of respect and awful pleasure. There she lay—the huge sea-castle—bearing the unconquerable flag of our country. She had but to open her jaws, as it were, and she might bring a second earthquake on the city—batter it into kingdom-come—with the Ajuda palace and the Necessidades, the churches, and the lean, dry, empty streets, and Don John, tremendous on horseback, in the midst of Black Horse Square. Wherever we looked we could see that enormous "Caledonia," with her flashing three lines of guns. We looked at the little boats which ever and anon came out of this monster, with humble wonder. There was the lieutenant who boarded us at midnight before we dropped anchor in the river: ten white-jacketed men pulling as one, swept along with the barge, gig, boat, curricle, or coach-and-six, with which he came up to us. We examined him—his red whiskers—his collars turned down—his duck trousers, his bullion epaulets—with awe. With the same reverential feeling we examined the seamen—the young gentleman in the bows of the boat—the handsome young officers of marines we met sauntering in the town next day—the Scotch surgeon who boarded us as we weighed anchor—every man, down to the broken-nosed mariner who was drunk in a wine-house, and had "Caledonia" written on his hat. Whereas at the Frenchmen we looked with undisguised contempt. We were ready to burst with laughter as we passed the Prince's vessel—there was a little French boy in a French boat alongside cleaning it, and twirling about a little French mop—we thought it the most comical, contemptible French boy, mop, boat, steamer, prince—Psha! it is of this wretched vapouring stuff that false patriotism is made. I write this as a sort of homily *à propos* of the day, and Cape Trafalgar, off which we lie. What business have I to strut the deck, and clap my wings, and cry "Cock-a-doodle-doo" over it? Some compatriots are at that work even now.

We have lost one by one all our jovial company. There were the five Oporto wine-merchants—all hearty English gentlemen—gone to their wine-butts, and their red-legged partridges, and their duels at Oporto. It appears that these gallant Britons

fight every morning among themselves, and give the benighted people among whom they live an opportunity to admire the spirit national. There is the brave honest major, with his wooden leg—the kindest and simplest of Irishmen: he has embraced his children, and reviewed his little invalid garrison of fifteen men, in the fort which he commands at Belem, by this time, and, I have no doubt, played to every soul of them the twelve tunes of his musical-box. It was pleasant to see him with that musical-box—how pleased he wound it up after dinner —how happily he listened to the little clinking tunes as they galloped, ding-dong, after each other! A man who carries a musical-box is always a good-natured man.

Then there was his Grace, or his Grandeur, the Archbishop of Beyrouth (in the parts of the infidels), His Holiness's Nuncio to the Court of Her Most Faithful Majesty, and who mingled among us like any simple mortal,—except that he had an extra smiling courtesy, which simple mortals do not always possess; and when you passed him as such, and puffed your cigar in his face, took off his hat with a grin of such prodigious rapture, as to lead you to suppose that the most delicious privilege of his whole life was that permission to look at the tip of your nose or of your cigar. With this most reverend prelate was his Grace's brother and chaplain—a very greasy and good-natured ecclesiastic, who, from his physiognomy, I would have imagined to be a dignitary of the Israelitish rather than the Romish Church—as profuse in smiling courtesy as his Lordship of Beyrouth. These two had a meek little secretary between them, and a tall French cook and valet, who, at meal times, might be seen busy about the cabin where their reverences lay. They were on their backs for the greater part of the voyage; their yellow countenances were not only unshaven, but, to judge from appearances, unwashed. They ate in private; and it was only of evenings, as the sun was setting over the western wave, and, comforted by the dinner, the cabin-passengers assembled on the quarter-deck, that we saw the dark faces of the reverend gentlemen among us for a while. They sank darkly into their berths when the steward's bell tolled for tea.

At Lisbon, where we came to anchor at midnight, a special boat came off, whereof the crew exhibited every token of reverence for the ambassador of the ambassador of Heaven, and carried him off from our company. This abrupt departure in

the darkness disappointed some of us, who had promised ourselves the pleasure of seeing his Grandeur depart in state in the morning, shaved, clean, and in full pontificals, the tripping little secretary swinging an incense-pot before him, and the greasy chaplain bearing his crosier.

Next day we had another bishop, who occupied the very same berth his Grace of Beyrouth had quitted—was sick in the very same way—so much so that this cabin of the "Lady Mary Wood" is to be christened "the bishop's berth" henceforth; and a handsome mitre is to be painted on the basin.

Bishop No. 2 was a very stout, soft, kind-looking old gentleman, in a square cap, with a handsome tassel of green and gold round his portly breast and back. He was dressed in black robes and tight purple stockings: and we carried him from Lisbon to the little flat coast of Faro, of which the meek old gentleman was the chief pastor.

We had not been half-an-hour from our anchorage in the Tagus, when his Lordship dived down into the episcopal berth. All that night there was a good smart breeze; it blew fresh all the next day, as we went jumping over the blue bright sea; and there was no sign of his Lordship the bishop until we were opposite the purple hills of Algarve, which lay some ten miles distant,—a yellow sunny shore stretching flat before them, whose long sandy flats and villages we could see with our telescope from the steamer.

Presently a little vessel, with a huge shining lateen sail, and bearing the blue and white Portuguese flag, was seen playing a sort of leap-frog on the jolly waves, jumping over them, and ducking down as merry as could be. This little boat came towards the steamer as quick as ever she could jump; and Captain Cooper roaring out, "Stop her!" to "Lady Mary Wood," her Ladyship's paddles suddenly ceased twirling, and news was carried to the good bishop that his boat was almost alongside, and that his hour was come.

It was rather an affecting sight to see the poor old fat gentleman, looking wistfully over the water as the boat now came up, and her eight seamen, with great noise, energy, and gesticulation, laid her by the steamer. The steamer steps were let down; his Lordship's servant, in blue and yellow livery (like the *Edinburgh Review*), cast over the episcopal luggage into the boat, along with his own bundle and the jack-boots with

which he rides postillion on one of the bishop's fat mules at Faro. The blue and yellow domestic went down the steps into the boat. Then came the bishop's turn; but he couldn't do it for a long while. He went from one passenger to another, sadly shaking them by the hand, often taking leave and seeming loth to depart, until Captain Cooper, in a stern but respectful tone, touched him on the shoulder, and said, I know not with what correctness, being ignorant of the Spanish language, "Señor 'Bispo! Señor 'Bispo!" on which summons the poor old man, looking ruefully round him once more, put his square cap under his arm, tucked up his long black petticoats, so as to show his purple stockings and jolly fat calves, and went trembling down the steps towards the boat. The good old man! I wish I had had a shake of that trembling podgy hand somehow before he went upon his sea martyrdom. I felt a love for that soft-hearted old Christian. Ah! let us hope his governante tucked him comfortably in bed when he got to Faro that night, and made him a warm gruel and put his feet in warm water. The men clung around him, and almost kissed him as they popped him into the boat, but he did not heed their caresses. Away went the boat scudding madly before the wind. Bang! another lateen-sailed boat in the distance fired a gun in his honour; but the wind was blowing away from the shore, and who knows when that meek bishop got home to his gruel?

I think these were the notables of our party. I will not mention the laughing ogling lady of Cadiz, whose manners, I very much regret to say, were a great deal too lively for my sense of propriety; nor those fair sufferers, her companions, who lay on the deck with sickly, smiling female resignation: nor the heroic children, who no sooner ate biscuit than they were ill, and no sooner were ill than they began eating biscuit again: but just allude to one other martyr, the kind lieutenant in charge of the mails, and who bore his cross with what I can't but think a very touching and noble resignation.

There's a certain sort of man whose doom in the world is disappointment,—who excels in it,—and whose luckless triumphs in his meek career of life, I have often thought, must be regarded by the kind eyes above with as much favour as the splendid successes and achievements of coarser and more prosperous men. As I sat with the lieutenant upon deck, his telescope laid over his lean legs, and he looking at the sunset

with a pleased, withered old face, he gave me a little account of his history. I take it he is in nowise disinclined to talk about it, simple as it is: he has been seven-and-thirty years in the navy, being somewhat more mature in the service than Lieutenant Peel, Rear-Admiral Prince de Joinville, and other commanders who need not be mentioned. He is a very well-educated man and reads prodigiously,—travels, histories, lives of eminent worthies and heroes, in his simple way. He is not in the least angry at his want of luck in the profession. "Were

I a boy to-morrow," he said, "I would begin it again; and when I see my schoolfellows, and how they have got on in life, if some are better off than I am, I find many are worse, and have no call to be discontented." So he carries Her Majesty's mails meekly through this world, waits upon port-admirals and captains in his old glazed hat, and is as proud of the pennon at the bow of his little boat, as if it were flying from the main-mast of a thundering man-of-war. He gets two hundred a year for his services, and has an old mother and a sister living in Eng-

land somewhere, who I will wager (though he never, I swear, said a word about it) have a good portion of this princely income.

Is it breaking a confidence to tell Lieutenant Bundy's history? Let the motive excuse the deed. It is a good, kind, wholesome, and noble character. Why should we keep all our admiration for those who win in this world, as we do, sycophants as we are? When we write a novel, our great stupid imaginations can go no further than to marry the hero to a fortune at the end, and to find out that he is a lord by right. O blundering lickspittle morality! And yet I would like to fancy some happy retributive Utopia in the peaceful cloudland, where my friend the meek lieutenant should find the yards of his ship manned as he went on board, all the guns firing an enormous salute (only without the least noise or vile smell of powder), and he be saluted on the deck as Admiral Sir James, or Sir Joseph—ay, or Lord Viscount Bundy, knight of all the orders above the sun.

I think this is a sufficient, if not a complete catalogue of the worthies on board the "Lady Mary Wood." In the week we were on board—it seemed a year, by the way—we came to regard the ship quite as a home. We felt for the captain—the most good-humoured, active, careful, ready of captains—a filial, a fraternal regard; for the providor, who provided for us with admirable comfort and generosity, a genial gratitude; and for the brisk steward's lads—brisk in serving the banquet, sympathising in handing the basin—every possible sentiment of regard and good-will. What winds blew, and how many knots we ran, are all noted down, no doubt, in the ship's log; and as for what ships we saw—every one of them, with their gunnage, tonnage, their nation, their direction whither they were bound—were not these all noted down with surprising ingenuity and precision by the lieutenant, at a family desk at which he sat every night, before a great paper elegantly and mysteriously ruled off with his large ruler? I have a regard for every man on board that ship, from the captain down to the crew—down even to the cook, with tattooed arms, sweating among the saucepans in the galley, who used (with a touching affection) to send us locks of his hair in the soup. And so, while our feelings and recollections are warm, let us shake hands with this knot of good fellows, comfortably floating about in their little box of wood and iron, across Channel, Biscay Bay, and the Atlantic, from Southampton Water to Gibraltar Straits.

CHAPTER IV.

Gibraltar.

SUPPOSE all the nations of the earth to send fitting ambassadors to represent them at Wapping or Portsmouth Point, with each, under its own national signboard and language, its appropriate house of call, and your imagination may figure the Main Street of Gibraltar: almost the only part of the town, I believe, which boasts of the name of street at all, the remaining house-rows being modestly called lanes, such as Bomb Lane, Battery Lane, Fusee Lane, and so on. In Main Street the Jews predominate, the Moors abound; and from the "Jolly Sailor," or the brave "Horse Marine," where the people of our nation are drinking British beer and gin, you hear choruses of "Garryowen" or "The Lass I left behind me;" while through the flaring lattices of the Spanish ventas come the clatter of castanets and the jingle and moan of Spanish guitars and ditties. It is a curious sight at evening this thronged street, with the people, in a hundred different costumes, bustling to and fro under the coarse flare of the lamps; swarthy Moors, in white or crimson robes; dark Spanish smugglers in tufted hats, with gay silk handkerchiefs round their heads; fuddled seamen from men-of-war, or merchantmen; porters, Galician or Genoese; and at every few minutes' interval, little squads of soldiers tramping to relieve guard at some one of the innumerable posts in the town.

Some of our party went to a Spanish venta, as a more convenient or romantic place of residence than an English house; others made choice of the club-house in Commercial Square, of which I formed an agreeable picture in my imagination; rather, perhaps, resembling the Junior United Service Club in Charles Street, by which every Londoner has passed ere this with respectful pleasure, catching glimpses of magnificent blazing candelabras, under which sit neat half-pay officers, drinking half-pints of port. The club-house of Gibraltar is not, however, of the Charles Street sort; it may have been cheerful once, and there are yet relics of splendour about it. When officers wore pigtails, and in the time of Governor O'Hara, it may have been a handsome place; but it is mouldy and decrepit now; and though his Excellency, Mr. Bulwer, was living there, and made no complaints that I heard of, other less distinguished persons

thought they had reason to grumble. Indeed, what is travelling made of? At least half its pleasures and incidents come out of inns; and of them the tourist can speak with much more truth and vivacity than of historical recollections compiled out of histories, or filched out of handbooks. But to speak of the best inn in a place needs no apology: that, at least, is useful information. As every person intending to visit Gibraltar cannot have seen the flea-bitten countenances of our companions, who fled from their Spanish venta to take refuge at the club the morning after our arrival, they may surely be thankful for being directed to the best house of accommodation in one of the most unromantic, uncomfortable, and prosaic of towns.

If one had a right to break the sacred confidence of the mahogany, I could entertain you with many queer stories of Gibraltar life, gathered from the lips of the gentlemen who enjoyed themselves round the dingy tablecloth of the club-house coffee-room, richly decorated with cold gravy and spilt beer. I heard there the very names of the gentlemen who wrote the famous letters from the "Warspite" regarding the French proceedings at Mogador; and met several refugee Jews from that place, who said that they were much more afraid of the Kabyles without the city than of the guns of the French squadron, of which they seemed to make rather light. I heard the last odds on the ensuing match between Captain Smith's b. g. Bolter, and Captain Brown's ch. c. Roarer: how the gun-room of Her Majesty's ship "Purgatory" had "cobbed" a tradesman of the town, and of the row in consequence. I heard capital stories of the way in which Wilkins had escaped the guard, and Thompson had been locked up among the mosquitoes for being out after ten without the lantern. I heard how the governor was an old ——, but to say what, would be breaking a confidence: only this may be divulged, that the epithet was exceedingly complimentary to Sir Robert Wilson. All the while these conversations were going on, a strange scene of noise and bustle was passing in the market-place, in front of the window, where Moors, Jews, Spaniards, soldiers were thronging in the sun; and a ragged fat fellow, mounted on a tobacco-barrel, with his hat cocked on his ear, was holding an auction, and roaring with an energy and impudence that would have done credit to Covent Garden.

The Moorish castle is the only building about the Rock which

has an air at all picturesque or romantic ; there is a plain Roman Catholic cathedral, a hideous new Protestant church of the cigar-divan architecture, and a Court-house with a portico which is said to be an imitation of the Parthenon : the ancient religious houses of the Spanish town are gone, or turned into military residences, and masked so that you would never know their former pious destination. You walk through narrow whitewashed lanes, bearing such martial names as are before mentioned, and by-streets with barracks on either side : small Newgate-like looking buildings, at the doors of which you may see the sergeants' ladies conversing ; or at the open windows of the officers' quarters, Ensign Fipps lying on his sofa and smoking his cigar, or Lieutenant Simson practising the flute to while away the weary hours of garrison dulness. I was surprised not to find more persons in the garrison library, where is a magnificent reading-room, and an admirable collection of books.

In spite of the scanty herbage and the dust on the trees, the Alameda is a beautiful walk ; of which the vegetation has been as laboriously cared for as the tremendous fortifications which flank it on either side. The vast Rock rises on one side with its interminable works of defence, and Gibraltar Bay is shining on the other, out on which from the terraces immense cannon are perpetually looking, surrounded by plantations of cannon-balls and beds of bomb-shells, sufficient, one would think, to blow away the whole peninsula. The horticultural and military mixture is indeed very queer : here and there temples, rustic summer-seats, &c., have been erected in the garden, but you are sure to see a great squat mortar look up from among the flower-pots : and amidst the aloes and geraniums sprouts the green petticoat and scarlet coat of a Highlander. Fatigue-parties are seen winding up the hill, and busy about the endless cannon-ball plantations ; awkward squads are drilling in the open spaces : sentries marching everywhere, and (this is a caution to artists) I am told have orders to run any man through who is discovered making a sketch of the place. It is always beautiful, especially at evening, when the people are sauntering along the walks, and the moon is shining on the waters of the bay and the hills and twinkling white houses of the opposite shore. Then the place becomes quite romantic : it is too dark to see the dust on the dried leaves ; the cannon-balls do not intrude too much, but have subsided into the shade ; the awkward squads are in

bed; even the loungers are gone, the fan-flirting Spanish ladies, the sallow black-eyed children, and the trim white-jacketed dandies. A fife is heard from some craft at roost on the quiet waters somewhere; or a faint cheer from yonder black steamer at the Mole, which is about to set out on some night expedition. You forget that the town is at all like Wapping, and deliver yourself up entirely to romance; the sentries look noble pacing there, silent in the moonlight, and Sandy's voice is quite musical as he challenges with a "Who goes there?"

"All's Well" is very pleasant when sung decently in tune, and inspires noble and poetic ideas of duty, courage, and danger: but when you hear it shouted all the night through, accompanied by a clapping of muskets in a time of profound peace, the sentinel's cry becomes no more romantic to the hearer than it is to the sandy Connaught-man or the bare-legged Highlander who delivers it. It is best to read about wars comfortably in Harry Lorrequer or Scott's novels, in which knights shout their war-cries, and jovial Irish bayoneteers hurrah, without depriving you of any blessed rest. Men of a different way of thinking, however, can suit themselves perfectly at Gibraltar; where there is marching and counter-marching, challenging and relieving guard all the night through. And not here in Commercial Square alone, but all over the huge Rock in the darkness—all through the mysterious zig-zags, and round the dark cannon-ball pyramids, and along the vast rock-galleries, and up to the topmost flag-staff, where the sentry can look out over two seas, poor fellows are marching and clapping muskets, and crying "All's Well," dressed in cap and feather, in place of honest nightcaps best befitting the decent hours of sleep.

All these martial noises three of us heard to the utmost advantage, lying on iron bedsteads at the time in a cracked old room on the ground-floor, the open windows of which looked into the square. No spot could be more favourably selected for watching the humours of a garrison town by night. About midnight, the door hard by us was visited by a party of young officers, who having had quite as much drink as was good for them, were naturally inclined for more; and when we remonstrated through the windows, one of them in a young tipsy voice asked after our mothers, and finally reeled away. How charming is the conversation of high-spirited youth! I don't know whether the guard got hold of them: but certainly if a

civilian had been hiccuping through the streets at that hour, he would have been carried off to the guard-house, and left to the mercy of the mosquitoes there, and had up before the Governor in the morning. The young man in the coffee-room tells me he goes to sleep every night with the keys of Gibraltar under his pillow. It is an awful image, and somehow completes the notion of the slumbering fortress. Fancy Sir Robert Wilson, his nose just visible over the sheets, his night-cap and the huge

key (you see the very identical one in Reynolds's portrait of Lord Heathfield) peeping out from under the bolster!

If I entertain you with accounts of inns and nightcaps it is because I am more familiar with these subjects than with history and fortifications: as far as I can understand the former, Gibraltar is the great British depôt for smuggling goods into the Peninsula. You see vessels lying in the harbour, and are told in so many words they are smugglers: all those smart Spaniards

with cigar and mantles are smugglers, and run tobaccos and cotton into Catalonia; all the respected merchants of the place are smugglers. The other day a Spanish revenue vessel was shot to death under the thundering great guns of the fort, for neglecting to bring to, but it so happened that it was in chase of a smuggler: in this little corner of her dominions Britain proclaims war to custom-houses, and protection to free trade. Perhaps ere a very long day, England may be acting that part towards the world, which Gibraltar performs towards Spain now; and the last war in which we shall ever engage may be a custom-house war. For once establish railroads and abolish preventive duties through Europe, and what is there left to fight for? It will matter very little then under what flag people live, and foreign ministers and ambassadors may enjoy a dignified sinecure; the army will rise to the rank of peaceful constables, not having any more use for their bayonets than those worthy people have for their weapons now who accompany the law at assizes under the name of javelin-men. The apparatus of bombs and eighty-four-pounders may disappear from the Alameda, and the crops of cannon-balls which now grow there may give place to other plants more pleasant to the eye; and the great key of Gibraltar may be left in the gate for anybody to turn at will, and Sir Robert Wilson may sleep in quiet.

I am afraid I thought it was rather a release, when, having made up our minds to examine the Rock in detail and view the magnificent excavations and galleries, the admiration of all military men, and the terror of any enemies who may attack the fortress, we received orders to embark forthwith in the "Tagus," which was to carry us to Malta and Constantinople. So we took leave of this famous Rock—this great blunderbuss—which we seized out of the hands of the natural owners a hundred and forty years ago, and which we have kept ever since tremendously loaded and cleaned and ready for use. To seize and have it is doubtless a gallant thing; it is like one of those tests of courage which one reads of in the chivalrous romances, when, for instance, Sir Huon of Bordeaux is called upon to prove his knighthood by going to Babylon and pulling out the Sultan's beard and front teeth in the midst of his Court there. But, after all, justice must confess it was rather hard on the poor Sultan. If we had the Spaniards established at Land's End, with impregnable Spanish fortifications on St. Michael's Mount, we should

perhaps come to the same conclusion. Meanwhile let us hope, during this long period of deprivation, the Sultan of Spain is reconciled to the loss of his front teeth and bristling whiskers—let us even try to think that he is better without them. At all events, right or wrong, whatever may be our title to the property, there is no Englishman but must think with pride of the manner in which his countrymen have kept it, and of the courage, endurance, and sense of duty with which stout old Eliott and his companions resisted Crillon and the Spanish battering ships and his fifty thousand men. There seems to be something more noble in the success of a gallant resistance than of an attack, however brave. After failing in his attack on the fort, the French General visited the English Commander who had foiled him, and parted from him and his garrison in perfect politeness and good-humour. The English troops, Drinkwater says, gave him thundering cheers as he went away, and the French in return complimented us on our gallantry, and lauded the humanity of our people. If we are to go on murdering each other in the old-fashioned way, what a pity it is that our battles cannot end in the old-fashioned way too!

One of our fellow-travellers, who had written a book, and had suffered considerably from sea-sickness during our passage along the coasts of France and Spain, consoled us all by saying that the very minute we got into the Mediterranean we might consider ourselves entirely free from illness; and, in fact, that it was unheard of in the Inland Sea. Even in the Bay of Gibraltar the water looked bluer than anything I have ever seen—except Miss Smith's eyes. I thought, somehow, the delicious faultless azure never could look angry—just like the eyes before alluded to—and under this assurance we passed the Strait, and began coasting the African shore calmly and without the least apprehension, as if we were as much used to the tempest as Mr. T. P. Cooke.

But when, in spite of the promise of the man who had written the book, we found ourselves worse than in the worst part of the Bay of Biscay, or off the storm-lashed rocks of Finisterre, we set down the author in question as a gross impostor, and had a mind to quarrel with him for leading us into this cruel error. The most provoking part of the matter, too, was, that the sky was deliciously clear and cloudless, the air balmy, the sea so insultingly blue that it seemed as if we had

no right to be ill at all, and that the innumerable little waves that frisked round about our keel were enjoying an *anerithmon gelasma* (this is one of my four Greek quotations: depend on it I will manage to introduce the other three before the tour is done)—seemed to be enjoying, I say, the above-named Greek quotation at our expense. Here is the dismal log of Wednesday, 4th of September:—"All attempts at dining very fruitless. Basins in requisition. Wind hard ahead. *Que diable allais-je faire dans cette galère?* Writing or thinking impossible: so read 'Letters from the Ægean.'" These brief words give, I think, a complete idea of wretchedness, despair, remorse, and prostration of soul and body. Two days previously we passed the forts and moles and yellow buildings of Algiers, rising very stately from the sea, and skirted by gloomy purple lines of African shore, with fires smoking in the mountains, and lonely settlements here and there.

On the 5th, to the inexpressible joy of all, we reached Valetta, the entrance to the harbour of which is one of the most stately and agreeable scenes ever admired by sea-sick traveller. The small basin was busy with a hundred ships, from the huge guard-ship, which lies there a city in itself;—merchantmen loading and crews cheering, under all the flags of the world flaunting in the sunshine; a half-score of busy black steamers perpetually coming and going, coaling and painting, and puffing and hissing in and out of harbour; slim men-of-war's barges shooting to and fro, with long shining oars flashing like wings over the water; hundreds of painted town-boats, with high heads and white awnings,—down to the little tubs in which some naked, tawny young beggars came paddling up to the steamer, entreating us to let them dive for halfpence. Round this busy blue water rise rocks, blazing in sunshine, and covered with every imaginable device of fortification; to the right, St. Elmo, with flag and lighthouse; and opposite, the Military Hospital, looking like a palace; and all round, the houses of the city, for its size the handsomest and most stately in the world.

Nor does it disappoint you on a closer inspection, as many a foreign town does. The streets are thronged with a lively comfortable-looking population; the poor seem to inhabit handsome stone palaces, with balconies and projecting windows of heavy carved stone. The lights and shadows, the cries

and stenches, the fruit-shops and fish-stalls, the dresses and chatter of all nations; the soldiers in scarlet, and women in black mantillas; the beggars, boatmen, barrels of pickled herrings and macaroni; the shovel-hatted priests and bearded capuchins; the tobacco, grapes, onions, and sunshine; the signboards, bottled-porter stores, the statues of saints and little chapels which jostle the stranger's eyes as he goes up the famous stairs from the Water-gate, make a scene of such pleasant confusion and liveliness as I have never witnessed before. And the effect of the groups of multitudinous actors in this busy cheerful drama is heightened, as it were, by the decorations of the stage. The sky is delightfully brilliant; all the houses and ornaments are stately; castle and palaces are rising all around; and the flag, towers, and walls of Fort St. Elmo look as fresh and magnificent as if they had been erected only yesterday.

The Strada Reale has a much more courtly appearance than that one described. Here are palaces, churches, court-houses and libraries, the genteel London shops, and the latest articles of perfumery. Gay young officers are strolling about in shell-jackets much too small for them; midshipmen are clattering by on hired horses; squads of priests, habited after the fashion of Don Basilio in the opera, are demurely pacing to and fro; professional beggars run shrieking after the stranger; and agents for horses, for inns, and for worse places still, follow him and insinuate the excellence of their goods. The houses where they are selling carpet-bags and pomatum were the palaces of the successors of the goodliest company of gallant knights the world ever heard tell of. It seems unromantic; but *these* were not the romantic Knights of St. John. The heroic days of the Order ended as the last Turkish galley lifted anchor after the memorable siege. The present stately houses were built in times of peace and splendour and decay. I doubt whether the Auberge de Provence, where the "Union Club" flourishes now, has ever seen anything more romantic than the pleasant balls held in the great room there.

The Church of St. John, not a handsome structure without, is magnificent within: a noble hall covered with a rich embroidery of gilded carving, the chapels of the different nations on either side, but not interfering with the main structure, of which the whole is simple, and the details only splendid:

it seemed to me a fitting place for this wealthy body of aristocratic soldiers, who made their devotions as it were on parade, and, though on their knees, never forgot their epaulets or their quarters of nobility. This mixture of religion and worldly pride seems incongruous at first; but have we not at church at home similar relics of feudal ceremony?—the verger with the silver mace who precedes the vicar to the desk; the two chaplains of my Lord Archbishop, who bow over his Grace as he enters the communion-table gate; even poor John, who follows my Lady with a coroneted prayer-book, and makes his *congé* as he hands it into the pew. What a chivalrous absurdity is the banner of some high and mighty prince, hanging over his stall in Windsor Chapel, when you think of the purpose for which men are supposed to assemble there! The Church of the Knights of St. John is paved over with sprawling heraldic devices of the dead gentlemen of the dead Order; as if, in the next world, they expected to take rank in conformity with their pedigrees, and would be marshalled into heaven according to the orders of precedence. Cumbrous handsome paintings adorn the walls and chapels, decorated with pompous monuments of Grand Masters. Beneath is a crypt, where more of these honourable and reverend warriors lie, in a state that a Simpson would admire. In the altar are said to lie three of the most gallant relics in the world; the keys of Acre, Rhodes, and Jerusalem. What blood was shed in defending these emblems! What faith, endurance, genius, and generosity; what pride, hatred, ambition, and savage lust of blood were roused together for their guardianship!

In the lofty halls and corridors of the Governor's house, some portraits of the late Grand Masters still remain: a very fine one, by Caravaggio, of a knight in gilt armour, hangs in the dining-room, near a full-length of poor Louis XVI., in Royal robes, the very picture of uneasy impotency. But the portrait of De Vignacourt is the only one which has a respectable air; the other chiefs of the famous Society are pompous old gentlemen in black, with huge periwigs, and crowns round their hats, and a couple of melancholy pages in yellow and red. But pages and wigs and Grand Masters have almost faded out of the canvas, and are vanishing into Hades with a most melancholy indistinctness. The names of most of these gentlemen, however, live as yet in the forts of the place, which all seem to have been eager to build

and christen : so that it seems as if, in the Malta mythology, they had been turned into freestone.

In the armoury is the very suit painted by Caravaggio, by the side of the armour of the noble old La Valette, whose heroism saved his island from the efforts of Mustapha and Dragut, and an army quite as fierce and numerous as that which was baffled before Gibraltar, by similar courage and resolution. The sword of the last-named famous corsair (a most truculent little scimitar), thousands of pikes and halberts, little old cannons and wall-pieces, helmets and cuirasses, which the knights or their people wore, are trimly arranged against the wall, and, instead of spiking Turks or arming warriors, now serve to point morals and adorn tales. And here likewise are kept many thousand muskets, swords, and boarding-pikes for daily use, and a couple of ragged old standards of one of the English regiments, who pursued and conquered in Egypt the remains of the haughty and famous French republican army, at whose appearance the last knights of Malta flung open the gates of all their fortresses, and consented to be extinguished without so much as a remonstrance, or a kick, or a struggle.

We took a drive into what may be called the country ; where the fields are rocks, and the hedges are stones—passing by the stone gardens of the Florian, and wondering at the number and handsomeness of the stone villages and churches rising everywhere among the stony hills. Handsome villas were passed everywhere, and we drove for a long distance along the sides of an aqueduct, quite a Royal work of the Caravaggio in gold armour, the Grand Master De Vignacourt. A most agreeable contrast to the arid rocks of the general scenery was the garden at the Governor's country-house ; with the orange-trees and water, its beautiful golden grapes, luxuriant flowers, and thick cool shrubberies. The eye longs for this sort of refreshment, after being seared with the hot glare of the general country ; and St. Antonio was as pleasant after Malta as Malta was after the sea.

We paid the island a subsequent visit in November, passing seventeen days at an establishment called Fort Manuel there, and by punsters the Manuel des Voyageurs ; where Government accommodates you with quarters ; where the authorities are so attentive as to scent your letters with aromatic vinegar before you receive them, and so careful of your health as to lock you up

in your room every night lest you should walk in your sleep, and so over the battlements into the sea: if you escaped drowning in the sea, the sentries on the opposite shore would fire at you, hence the nature of the precaution. To drop, however, this satirical strain; those who know what quarantine is, may fancy that the place somehow becomes unbearable in which it has been endured. And though the November climate of Malta is like the most delicious May in England, and though there is every gaiety and amusement in the town, a comfortable little opera, a good old library filled full of good old books (none of your works of modern science, travel, and history, but good old *useless* books of the last two centuries), and nobody to trouble you in reading them, and though the society of Valetta is most hospitable, varied, and agreeable, yet somehow one did not feel *safe* in the island, with perpetual glimpses of Fort Manuel from the opposite shore; and, lest the quarantine authorities should have a fancy to fetch one back again, on a pretext of posthumous plague, we made our way to Naples by the very first opportunity —those who remained, that is, of the little Eastern Expedition. They were not all there. The Giver of life and death had removed two of our company: one was left behind to die in Egypt, with a mother to bewail his loss; another we buried in the dismal lazaretto cemetery.

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One is bound to look at this, too, as a part of our journey. Disease and death are knocking perhaps at your next cabin door. Your kind and cheery companion has ridden his last ride, and emptied his last glass beside you. And while fond hearts are yearning for him far away, and his own mind, if conscious, is turning eagerly towards the spot of the world whither affection or interest calls it—the Great Father summons the anxious spirit from earth to Himself, and ordains that the nearest and dearest shall meet here no more.

Such an occurrence as a death in a lazaretto, mere selfishness renders striking. We were walking with him but two days ago on deck. One has a sketch of him, another his card, with the address written yesterday, and given with an invitation to come and see him at home in the country, where his children are looking for him. He is dead in a day, and buried in the walls of the prison. A doctor felt his pulse by deputy—a clergyman comes from the town to read the last service over him—and the

friends, who attend his funeral, are marshalled by lazaretto-guardians, so as not to touch each other. Every man goes back to his room and applies the lesson to himself. One would not so depart without seeing again the dear dear faces. We reckon up those we love: they are but very few, but I think one loves them better than ever now. Should it be your turn next?—and why not? Is it pity or comfort to think of that affection which watches and survives you?

The Maker has linked together the whole race of man with this chain of love. I like to think that there is no man but has had kindly feelings for some other, and he for his neighbour, until we bind together the whole family of Adam. Nor does it end here. It joins heaven and earth together. For my friend or my child of past days is still my friend or my child to me here, or in the home prepared for us by the Father of all. If identity survives the grave, as our faith tells us, is it not a consolation to think that there may be one or two souls among the purified and just, whose affection watches us invisible, and follows the poor sinner on earth?

CHAPTER V.

Athens.

NOT feeling any enthusiasm myself about Athens, my bounden duty of course is clear, to sneer and laugh heartily at all who have. In fact, what business has a lawyer, who was in Pump Court this day three weeks, and whose common reading is law reports or the newspaper, to pretend to fall in love for the long vacation with mere poetry, of which I swear a great deal is very doubtful, and to get up an enthusiasm quite foreign to his nature and usual calling in life? What call have ladies to consider Greece "romantic," they who get their notions of mythology from the well-known pages of "Tooke's Pantheon"? What is the reason that blundering Yorkshire squires, young dandies from Corfu regiments, jolly sailors from ships in the harbour, and yellow old Indians returning from Bundelcund, should think proper to be enthusiastic about a country of which they know nothing; the mere physical beauty of which they cannot, for the most part, comprehend; and because certain

characters lived in it two thousand four hundred years ago? What have these people in common with Pericles, what have these ladies in common with Aspasia (O fie)? Of the race of Englishmen who come wandering about the tomb of Socrates, do you think the majority would not have voted to hemlock him? Yes: for the very same superstition which leads men by the nose now, drove them onward in the days when the lowly husband of Xantippe died for daring to think simply and to speak the truth. I know of no quality more magnificent in fools than their faith: that perfect consciousness they have, that they are doing virtuous and meritorious actions, when they are performing acts of folly, murdering Socrates, or pelting Aristides with holy oyster-shells—all for Virtue's sake; and a "History of Dulness in all Ages of the World," is a book which a philosopher would surely be hanged, but as certainly blessed, for writing.

If papa and mamma (honour be to them!) had not followed the faith of their fathers, and thought proper to send away their only beloved son (afterwards to be celebrated under the name of Titmarsh) into ten years' banishment of infernal misery, tyranny, annoyance; to give over the fresh feelings of the heart of the little Michael Angelo to the discipline of vulgar bullies, who, in order to lead tender young children to the Temple of Learning (as they do in the spelling-books), drive them on with clenched fists and low abuse; if they fainted, revive them with a thump, or assailed them with a curse; if they were miserable, consoled them with a brutal jeer—if, I say, my dear parents, instead of giving me the inestimable benefit of a ten years' classical education, had kept me at home with my dear thirteen sisters, it is probable I should have liked this country of Attica, in sight of the blue shores of which the present pathetic letter is written; but I was made so miserable in youth by a classical education, that all connected with it is disagreeable in my eyes; and I have the same recollection of Greek in youth that I have of castor-oil.

So in coming in sight of the promontory of Sunium, where the Greek Muse, in an awful vision, came to me, and said in a patronising way, "Why, my dear" (she always, the old spinster, adopts this high and mighty tone)—"Why, my dear, are you not charmed to be in this famous neighbourhood, in this land of poets and heroes, of whose history your classical

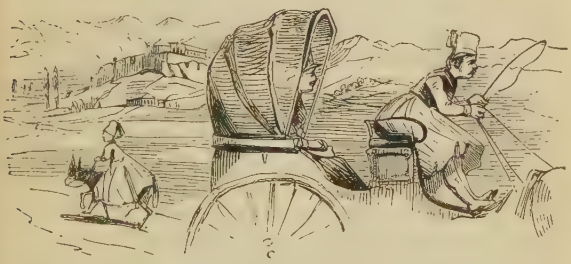
education ought to have made you a master? if it did not, you have woefully neglected your opportunities, and your dear parents have wasted their money in sending you to school." I replied, "Madam, your company in youth was made so laboriously disagreeable to me, that I can't at present reconcile myself to you in age. I read your poets, but it was in fear and trembling; and a cold sweat is but an ill accompaniment to poetry. I blundered through your histories; but history is so dull (saving your presence) of herself, that when the brutal

dulness of a schoolmaster is superadded to her own slow conversation, the union becomes intolerable: hence I have not the slightest pleasure in renewing my acquaintance with a lady who has been the source of so much bodily and mental discomfort to me." To make a long story short, I am anxious to apologise for a want of enthusiasm in the classical line, and to excuse an ignorance which is of the most undeniable sort.

This is an improper frame of mind for a person visiting the land of Æschylus and Euripides; add to which, we have been

abominably overcharged at the inn: and what are the blue hills of Attica, the silver calm basin of Piræus, the heathery heights of Pentelicus, and yonder rocks crowned by the Doric columns of the Parthenon, and the thin Ionic shafts of the Erechtheum, to a man who has had little rest, and is bitten all over by bugs? Was Alcibiades bitten by bugs, I wonder; and did the brutes crawl over him as he lay in the rosy arms of Phryne? I wished all night for Socrates' hammock or basket, as it is described in the "Clouds;" in which resting-place, no doubt, the abominable animals kept perforce clear of him.

A French man-of-war, lying in the silvery little harbour, sternly eyeing out of its stern port-holes a saucy little English



corvette beside, began playing sounding marches as a crowd of boats came paddling up to the steamer's side to convey us travellers to shore. There were Russian schooners and Greek brigs lying in this little bay; dumpy little windmills whirling round on the sunburnt heights round about it; an improvised town of quays and marine taverns has sprung up on the shore; a host of jingling barouches, more miserable than any to be seen even in Germany, were collected at the landing-place; and the Greek drivers (how queer they looked in skull-caps, shabby jackets with profuse embroidery of worsted, and endless petticoats of dirty calico!) began, in a generous ardour for securing passengers, to abuse each other's horses and carriages in the regular London fashion. Satire could certainly hardly caricature the vehicle in which we were made to journey to

Athens; and it was only by thinking that, bad as they were, these coaches were much more comfortable contrivances than any Alcibiades or Cimon ever had, that we consoled ourselves along the road. It was flat for six miles along the plain to the city; and you see for the greater part of the way the purple mount on which the Acropolis rises, and the gleaming houses of the town spread beneath. Round this wide, yellow, barren plain,—a stunted district of olive-trees is almost the only vegetation visible—there rises, as it were, a sort of chorus of the most beautiful mountains; the most elegant, gracious, and noble the eye ever looked on. These hills did not appear at all lofty or terrible, but superbly rich and aristocratic. The clouds were dancing round about them; you could see their rosy purple shadows sweeping round the clear serene summits of the hill. To call a hill aristocratic seems affected or absurd; but the difference between these hills and the others, is the difference between Newgate Prison and the Travellers' Club, for instance: both are buildings; but the one stern, dark, and coarse; the other rich, elegant, and festive. At least, so I thought. With such a stately palace as munificent Nature had built for these people, what could they be themselves but lordly, beautiful, brilliant, brave, and wise? We saw four Greeks on donkeys on the road (which is a dust-whirlwind where it is not a puddle); and other four were playing with a dirty pack of cards, at a barrack that English poets have christened the "Half-way House." Does external nature and beauty influence the soul to good? You go about Warwickshire, and fancy that from merely being born and wandering in those sweet sunny plains and fresh woodlands Shakspeare must have drunk in a portion of that frank artless sense of beauty which lies about his works like a bloom or dew; but a Coventry ribbon-maker, or a slang Leamington squire, are looking on those very same landscapes too, and what do they profit? You theorise about the influence which the climate and appearance of Attica must have had in ennobling those who were born there: yonder dirty, swindling, ragged blackguards, lolling over greasy cards three hours before noon, quarrelling and shrieking, armed to the teeth and afraid to fight, are bred out of the same land which begot the philosophers and heroes. But the "Half-way House" is passed by this time, and behold! we are in the capital of King Otho.

I swear solemnly that I would rather have two hundred a

year in Fleet Street, than be King of the Greeks, with Basileus written before my name round their beggarly coin; with the bother of perpetual revolutions in my huge plaster-of-Paris palace, with no amusement but a drive in the afternoon over a wretched arid country, where roads are not made, with ambassadors (the deuce knows why, for what good can the English, or the French, or the Russian party get out of such a bankrupt alliance as this?) perpetually pulling and tugging at me, away from honest Germany, where there is beer and æsthetic conversation, and operas at a small cost. The shabbiness of this place actually beats Ireland, and that is a strong word. The palace of the Basileus is an enormous edifice of plaster, in a square containing six houses, three donkeys, no roads, no fountains (except in the picture of the inn); backwards it seems to look straight to the mountain—on one side is a beggarly garden—the King goes out to drive (revolutions permitting) at five—some four-and-twenty blackguards saunter up to the huge sandhill of a terrace, as His Majesty passes by in a gilt barouche and an absurd fancy dress; the gilt barouche goes plunging down the sandhills; the two dozen soldiers, who have been presenting arms, slouch off to their quarters; the vast barrack of a palace remains entirely white, ghastly, and lonely; and, save the braying of a donkey now and then (which long-eared minstrels are more active and sonorous in Athens than in any place I know), all is entirely silent round Basileus's palace. How could people who knew Leopold fancy he would be so "jolly green" as to take such a berth? It was only a gobemouche of a Bavarian that could ever have been induced to accept it.

I beseech you to believe that it was not the bill and the bugs at the inn which induced the writer hereof to speak so slightingly of the residence of Basileus. These evils are now cured and forgotten. This is written off the leaden flats and mounds which they call the Troad. It is stern justice alone which pronounces this excruciating sentence. It was a farce to make this place into a kingly capital; and I make no manner of doubt that King Otho, the very day he can get away unperceived, and get together the passage-money, will be off for dear old Deutschland, Fatherland, Beerland!

I have never seen a town in England which may be compared to this; for though Herne Bay is a ruin now, money was

once spent upon it and houses built; here, beyond a few score of mansions comfortably laid out, the town is little better than a rickety agglomeration of larger and smaller huts, tricked out here and there with the most absurd cracked ornaments and cheap attempts at elegance. But neatness is the elegance of poverty, and these people despise such a homely ornament. I have got a map with squares, fountains, theatres, public gardens, and Places d'Othon marked out; but they only exist in the paper capital—the wretched tumble-down wooden one boasts of none.

One is obliged to come back to the old disagreeable comparison of Ireland. Athens may be about as wealthy a place as Carlow or Killarney—the streets swarm with idle crowds, the innumerable little lanes flow over with dirty little children, they are playing and puddling about in the dirt everywhere, with great big eyes, yellow faces, and the queerest little gowns and skull-caps. But in the outer man, the Greek has far the advantage of the Irishman: most of them are well and decently dressed (if five-and-twenty yards of petticoat may not be called decent, what may?), they swagger to and fro with huge knives in their girdles. Almost all the men are handsome, but live hard, it is said, in order to decorate their backs with those fine clothes of theirs. I have seen but two or three handsome women, and these had the great drawback which is common to the race—I mean, a sallow, greasy, coarse complexion, at which it was not advisable to look too closely.

And on this score I think we English may pride ourselves on possessing an advantage (by *we*, I mean the lovely ladies to whom this is addressed with the most respectful compliments) over the most classical country in the world. I don't care for beauty which will only bear to be looked at from a distance, like a scene in a theatre. What is the most beautiful nose in the world, if it be covered with a skin of the texture and colour of coarse whitey-brown paper; and if Nature has made it as slippery and shining as though it had been anointed with pomatum? They may talk about beauty, but would you wear a flower that had been dipped in a grease-pot? No; give me a fresh, dewy, healthy rose out of Somersetshire; not one of those superb, tawdry, unwholesome exotics, which are only good to make poems about. Lord Byron wrote more cant of this sort than any poet I know of. Think of "the peasant girls

with dark blue eyes" of the Rhine—the brown-faced, flat-nosed, thick-lipped, dirty wenches! Think of "filling high a cup of Samian wine;" small beer is nectar compared to it, and Byron himself always drank gin. That man *never* wrote from his heart. He got up rapture and enthusiasm with an eye to the public; but this is dangerous ground, even more dangerous than to look Athens full in the face, and say that your eyes are not dazzled by its beauty. The Great Public admires Greece and Byron: the public knows best. Murray's "Guide-book" calls the latter "our native bard." Our native bard! *Mon Dieu! He* Shakspeare's, Milton's, Keats's, Scott's native bard! Well, woe be to the man who denies the public gods!

The truth is, then, that Athens is a disappointment; and I am angry that it should be so. To a skilled antiquarian, or an enthusiastic Greek scholar, the feelings created by a sight of the place of course will be different; but you who would be inspired by it must undergo a long preparation of reading; and possess, too, a particular feeling; both of which, I suspect, are uncommon in our busy commercial newspaper-reading country. Men only say they are enthusiastic about the Greek and Roman authors and history, because it is considered proper and respectable. And we know how gentlemen in Baker Street have editions of the classics handsomely bound in the library, and how they use them. Of course they don't retire to read the newspaper; it is to look over a favourite ode of Pindar, or to discuss an obscure passage in Athenæus! Of course country magistrates and Members of Parliament are always studying Demosthenes and Cicero; we know it from their continual habit of quoting the Latin grammar in Parliament. But it is agreed that the classics are respectable; therefore we are to be enthusiastic about them. Also let us admit that Byron is to be held up as "our native bard."

I am not so entire a heathen as to be insensible to the beauty of those relics of Greek art, of which men much more learned and enthusiastic have written such piles of descriptions. I thought I could recognise the towering beauty of the prodigious columns of the Temple of Jupiter; and admire the astonishing grace, severity elegance, completeness of the Parthenon. The little Temple of Victory, with its fluted Corinthian shafts, blazed under the sun almost as fresh as it must have appeared to the eyes of its founders; I saw nothing more charming and bril-

liant, more graceful, festive, and aristocratic than this sumptuous little building. The Roman remains which lie in the town below look like the works of barbarians beside these perfect structures. They jar strangely on the eye, after it has been accustoming itself to perfect harmony and proportions. If, as the schoolmaster tells us, the Greek writing is as complete as the Greek art; if an ode of Pindar is as glittering and pure as the Temple of Victory; or a discourse of Plato as polished and calm as yonder mystical portico of the Erechtheum: what treasures of the senses and delights of the imagination have those lost to whom the Greek books are as good as sealed!

And yet one meets with very dull first-class men. Genius won't transplant from one brain to another, or is ruined in the carriage, like fine Burgundy. Sir Robert Peel and Sir John Hobhouse are both good scholars; but their poetry in Parliament does not strike one as fine. Muzzle, the schoolmaster, who is bullying poor trembling little boys, was a fine scholar when he was a sizar, and a ruffian then and ever since. Where is the great poet, since the days of Milton, who has improved the natural offshoots of his brain by grafting it from the Athenian tree?

I had a volume of Tennyson in my pocket, which somehow settled that question, and ended the querulous dispute between me and Conscience, under the shape of the neglected and irritated Greek muse, which had been going on ever since I had commenced my walk about Athens. The old spinster saw me wince at the idea of the author of Dora and Ulysses, and tried to follow up her advantage by further hints of time lost, and precious opportunities thrown away. "You might have written poems like them," said she; "or, no, not like them perhaps, but you might have done a neat prize poem, and pleased your papa and mamma. You might have translated Jack and Jill into Greek iambics, and been a credit to your college." I turned testily away from her. "Madam," says I, "because an eagle houses on a mountain, or soars to the sun, don't you be angry with a sparrow that perches on a garret window, or twitters on a twig. Leave me to myself: look, my beak is not aquiline by any means."

And so, my dear friend, you who have been reading this last page in wonder, and who, instead of a description of Athens, have been accommodated with a lament on the part

of the writer, that he was idle at school, and does not know Greek, excuse this momentary outbreak of egotistic despondency. To say truth, dear Jones, when one walks among the nests of the eagles, and sees the prodigious eggs they laid, a certain feeling of discomfiture must come over us smaller birds. You and I could not invent—it even stretches our minds painfully to try and comprehend part of the beauty of the Parthenon —ever so little of it,—the beauty of a single column,—a fragment of a broken shaft lying under the astonishing blue sky there, in the midst of that unrivalled landscape. There may be grander aspects of nature, but none more deliciously beautiful. The hills rise in perfect harmony, and fall in the most exquisite cadences—the sea seems brighter, the islands more purple, the clouds more light and rosy than elsewhere. As you look up through the open roof, you are almost oppressed by the serene depth of the blue overhead. Look even at the fragments of the marble, how soft and pure it is, glittering and white like fresh snow! "I was all beautiful," it seems to say: "even the hidden parts of me were spotless, precious, and fair"—and so, musing over this wonderful scene, perhaps I get some feeble glimpse or idea of that ancient Greek spirit which peopled it with sublime races of heroes and gods;* and which I never could get out of a Greek book,—no, not though Muzzle flung it at my head.

CHAPTER VI.

Smyrna—First Glimpses of the East.

I AM glad that the Turkish part of Athens was extinct, so that I should not be balked of the pleasure of entering an Eastern town by an introduction to any garbled or incomplete specimen of one. Smyrna seems to me the most Eastern of all I have seen; as Calais will probably remain to the Englishman the

* Saint Paul speaking from the Areopagus, and rebuking these superstitions away, yet speaks tenderly to the people before him, whose devotions he had marked; quotes their poets, to bring them to think of the God unknown, whom they had ignorantly worshipped; and says, that the times of this ignorance *God winked at*, but that now it was time to repent. No rebuke can surely be more gentle than this delivered by the upright Apostle.

most French town in the world. The jack-boots of the postillions don't seem so huge elsewhere, or the tight stockings of the maid-servants so Gallic. The churches and the ramparts, and the little soldiers on them, remain for ever impressed upon your memory; from which larger temples and buildings, and whole armies have subsequently disappeared: and the first words of actual French heard spoken, and the first dinner at "Quillacq's," remain after twenty years as clear as on the first day. Dear Jones, can't you remember the exact smack of the

white Hermitage, and the toothless old fellow singing "Largo al factotum"?

The first day in the East is like that. After that there is nothing. The wonder is gone, and the thrill of that delightful shock, which so seldom touches the nerves of plain men of the world, though they seek for it everywhere. One such looked out at Smyrna from our steamer, and yawned without the least excitement, and did not betray the slightest emotion, as boats with real Turks on board came up to the ship. There lay the

town with minarets and cypresses, domes and castles; great guns were firing off, and the blood-red flag of the Sultan flaring over the fort ever since sunrise; woods and mountains came down to the gulf's edge, and as you looked at them with the telescope, there peeped out of the general mass a score of pleasant episodes of Eastern life—there were cottages with quaint roofs; silent cool kiosks, where the chief of the eunuchs brings down the ladies of the harem. I saw Hassan, the fisherman, getting his nets; and Ali Baba going off with his donkey to the great forest for wood. Smith looked at these wonders quite unmoved; and I was surprised at his apathy; but he had been at Smyrna before. A man only sees the miracle once; though you yearn over it ever so, it won't come again. I saw nothing of Ali Baba and Hassan the next time we came to Smyrna, and had some doubts (recollecting the badness of the inn) about landing at all. A person who wishes to understand France or the East should come in a yacht to Calais or Smyrna, land for two hours, and never afterwards go back again.

But those two hours are beyond measure delightful. Some of us were querulous up to that time, and doubted of the wisdom of making the voyage. Lisbon, we owned, was a failure; Athens a dead failure; Malta very well, but not worth the trouble and sea-sickness: in fact, Baden-Baden or Devonshire would be a better move than this; when Smyrna came, and rebuked all mutinous Cockneys into silence. Some men may read this who are in want of a sensation. If they love the odd and picturesque, if they loved the "Arabian Nights" in their youth, let them book themselves on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental vessels, and try one *dip* into Constantinople or Smyrna. Walk into the bazaar, and the East is unveiled to you: how often and often have you tried to fancy this, lying out on a summer holiday at school! It is wonderful, too, how *like* it is: you may imagine that you have been in the place before, you seem to know it so well!

The beauty of that poetry is, to me, that it was never too handsome; there is no fatigue of sublimity about it. Shacabac and the little Barber play as great a part in it as the heroes; there are no uncomfortable sensations of terror; you may be familiar with the great Afreet, who was going to execute the travellers for killing his son with a date-stone. Morgiana, when she kills the forty robbers with boiling oil, does not seem to hurt

them in the least; and though King Schahriar makes a practice of cutting off his wives' heads, yet you fancy they have got them on again in some of the back rooms of the palace, where they are dancing and playing on dulcimers. How fresh, easy, good-natured, is all this! How delightful is that notion of the pleasant Eastern people about knowledge, where the height of science is made to consist in the answering of riddles! and all the mathematicians and magicians bring their great beards to bear on a conundrum!

When I got into the bazaar among this race, somehow I felt as if they were all friends. There sat the merchants in their little shops, quiet and solemn, but with friendly looks. There was no smoking, it was the Ramazan; no eating, the fish and meat fizzing in the enormous pots of the cook-shops are only for the Christians. The children abounded; the law is not so stringent upon them, and many wandering merchants were there selling figs (in the name of the Prophet, doubtless) for their benefit, and elbowing onwards with baskets of grapes and cucumbers. Countrymen passed bristling over with arms, each with a huge bellyful of pistols and daggers in his girdle; fierce, but not the least dangerous. Wild swarthy Arabs, who had come in with the caravans, walked solemnly about, very different in look and demeanour from the sleek inhabitants of the town. Greeks and Jews squatted and smoked, their shops tended by sallow-faced boys, with large eyes, who smiled and welcomed you in; negroes bustled about in gaudy colours; and women, with black nose-bags and shuffling yellow slippers, chattered and bargained at the doors of the little shops. There was the rope quarter and the sweetmeat quarter, and the pipe bazaar and the arm bazaar, and the little turned-up shoe quarter, and the shops where ready-made jackets and pelisses were swinging, and the region where, under the ragged awning, regiments of tailors were at work. The sun peeps through these awnings of mat or canvas, which are hung over the narrow lanes of the bazaar, and ornaments them with a thousand freaks of light and shadow. Cogia Hassan Alhabbal's shop is in a blaze of light; while his neighbour, the barber and coffee-house keeper, has his premises, his low seats and narghilés, his queer pots and basins, in the shade. The cobblers are always good-natured; there was one who, I am sure, has been revealed to me in my dreams, in a dirty old green turban, with a pleasant wrinkled face like an apple,

twinkling his little grey eyes as he held them up to talk to the gossips, and smiling under a delightful old grey beard, which did the heart good to see. You divine the conversation between him and the cucumber-man, as the Sultan used to understand the language of birds. Are any of those cucumbers stuffed with pearls, and is that Armenian with the black square turban Haroun Alraschid in disguise, standing yonder by the fountain where the children are drinking—the gleaming marble fountain, chequered all over with light and shadow, and engraved with delicate arabesques and sentences from the Koran?

But the greatest sensation of all is when the camels come. Whole strings of real camels, better even than in the procession of Blue Beard, with soft rolling eyes and bended necks, swaying from one side of the bazaar to the other, to and fro, and treading gingerly with their great feet. O you fairy dreams of boyhood! O you sweet meditations of half-holidays, here you are realised for half-an-hour! The genius which presides over youth led us to do a good action that day. There was a man sitting in an open room, ornamented with fine long-tailed sentences of the Koran: some in red, some in blue; some written diagonally over the paper; some so shaped as to represent ships, dragons, or mysterious animals. The man squatted on a carpet in the middle of this room, with folded arms, waggling his head to and fro, swaying about, and singing through his nose choice phrases from the sacred work. But from the room above came a clear noise of many little shouting voices, much more musical than that of Naso in the matted parlour, and the guide told us it was a school, so we went upstairs to look.

I declare, on my conscience, the master was in the act of bastinadoing a little mulatto boy; his feet were in a bar, and the brute was laying on with a cane; so we witnessed the howling of the poor boy, and the confusion of the brute who was administering the correction. The other children were made to shout, I believe, to drown the noise of their little comrade's howling; but the punishment was instantly discontinued as our hats came up over the stair-trap, and the boy cast loose, and the bamboo huddled into a corner, and the schoolmaster stood before us abashed. All the small scholars in red caps, and the little girls in gaudy handkerchiefs, turned their big wondering dark eyes towards us; and the caning was over for *that* time, let us trust. I don't envy some schoolmasters

in a future state. I pity that poor little blubbering Mahometan: he will never be able to relish the "Arabian Nights" in the original, all his life long.

From this scene we rushed off somewhat discomposed to make a breakfast off red mullets and grapes, melons, pomegranates, and Smyrna wine, at a dirty little comfortable inn, to which we were recommended: and from the windows of which we had a fine cheerful view of the gulf and its busy craft, and the loungers and merchants along the shore. There were camels unloading at one wharf, and piles of melons much bigger than the Gibraltar cannon-balls at another. It was the fig-season, and we passed through several alleys encumbered with long rows of fig-dressers, children and women for the most part, who were packing the fruit diligently into drums, dipping them in salt water first, and spreading them neatly over with leaves; while the figs and leaves are drying, large white worms crawl out of them, and swarm over the decks of the ships which carry them to Europe and to England, where small children eat them with pleasure—I mean the figs, not the worms—and where they are still served at wine-parties at the Universities. When fresh they are not better than elsewhere; but the melons are of admirable flavour, and so large, that Cinderella might almost be accommodated with a coach made of a big one, without any very great distension of its original proportions.

Our guide, an accomplished swindler, demanded two dollars as the fee for entering the mosque, which others of our party subsequently saw for sixpence, so we did not care to examine that place of worship. But there were other cheaper sights, which were to the full as picturesque, for which there was no call to pay money, or, indeed, for a day, scarcely to move at all. I doubt whether a man who would smoke his pipe on a bazaar counter all day, and let the city flow by him, would not be almost as well employed as the most active curiosity-hunter.

To be sure he would not see the women. Those in the bazaar were shabby people for the most part, whose black masks nobody would feel a curiosity to remove. You could see no more of their figures than if they had been stuffed in bolsters; and even their feet were brought to a general splay uniformity by the double yellow slippers which the wives of true believers wear. But it is in the Greek and Armenian quarters, and among those poor Christians who were pulling figs, that you see the

beauties ; and a man of a generous disposition may lose his heart half-a-dozen times a day in Smyrna. There was the pretty maid at work at a tambour-frame in an open porch, with an old duenna spinning by her side, and a goat tied up to the railings of the little court-garden ; there was the nymph who came down the stair with the pitcher on her head, and gazed with great calm eyes, as large and stately as Juno's ; there was the gentle mother, bending over a queer cradle, in which lay a small crying bundle of infancy. All these three charmers were seen in a single street in the Armenian quarter, where the house-doors are all open, and the women of the families sit under the arches in the court. There was the fig-girl, beautiful beyond all others, with an immense coil of deep black hair twisted round a head of which Raphael was worthy to draw the outline and Titian to paint the colour. I wonder the Sultan has not swept her off, or that the Persian merchants, who come with silks and sweetmeats, have not kidnapped her for the Shah of Tehran.

We went to see the Persian merchants at their khan, and purchased some silks there from a swarthy black-bearded man, with a conical cap of lambswool. Is it not hard to think that silks bought of a man in a lambswool cap, in a caravanserai, brought hither on the backs of camels, should have been manufactured after all at Lyons? Others of our party bought carpets, for which the town is famous ; and there was one who absolutely laid in a stock of real Smyrna figs ; and purchased three or four real Smyrna sponges for his carriage ; so strong was his passion for the genuine article.

I wonder that no painter has given us familiar views of the East : not processions, grand sultans, or magnificent landscapes ; but faithful transcripts of everyday Oriental life, such as each street will supply to him. The camels afford endless motives, couched in the market-places, lying by thousands in the camel-square, snorting and bubbling after their manner, the sun blazing down on their backs, their slaves and keepers lying behind them in the shade : and the Caravan Bridge, above all, would afford a painter subjects for a dozen of pictures. Over this Roman arch, which crosses the Meles river, all the caravans pass on their entrance to the town. On one side, as we sat and looked at it, was a great row of plane-trees ; on the opposite bank, a deep wood of tall cypresses—in the midst of which rose up innumerable grey tombs, surmounted with the turbans of the defunct believers.

Beside the stream, the view was less gloomy. There was under the plane-trees a little coffee-house, shaded by a trellis-work, covered over with a vine, and ornamented with many rows of shining pots and water-pipes, for which there was no use at noon-day now, in the time of Ramazan. Hard by the coffee-house was a garden and a bubbling marble fountain, and over the stream was a broken summer-house, to which amateurs may ascend for the purpose of examining the river; and all round the plane-trees plenty of stools for those who were inclined to sit and drink sweet thick coffee, or cool lemonade made of fresh green citrons. The master of the house, dressed in a white turban and light blue pelisse, lolled under the coffee-house awning; the slave in white with a crimson striped jacket, his face as black as ebony, brought us pipes and lemonade again, and returned to his station at the coffee-house, where he curled his black legs together, and began singing out of his flat nose to the thrumming of a long guitar with wire strings. The instrument was not bigger than a soup-ladle, with a long straight handle, but its music pleased the performer; for his eyes rolled shining about, and his head wagged, and he grinned with an innocent intensity of enjoyment that did one good to look at. And there was a friend to share his pleasure: a Turk dressed in scarlet, and covered all over with daggers and pistols, sat leaning forward on his little stool, rocking about, and grinning quite as eagerly as the black minstrel. As he sang and we listened, figures of women bearing pitchers went passing over the Roman bridge, which we saw between the large trunks of the planes; or grey forms of camels were seen stalking across it, the string preceded by the little donkey, who is always here their long-eared conductor.

These are very humble incidents of travel. Wherever the steamboat touches the shore adventure retreats into the interior, and what is called romance vanishes. It won't bear the vulgar gaze; or rather the light of common day puts it out, and it is only in the dark that it shines at all. There is no cursing and insulting of Giaours now. If a Cockney looks or behaves in a particularly ridiculous way, the little Turks come out and laugh at him. A Londoner is no longer a spittoon for true believers: and now that dark Hassan sits in his divan and drinks champagne, and Selim has a French watch, and Zuleika perhaps takes Morison's pills, Byronism becomes absurd instead of sublime, and is only a foolish expression of Cockney wonder. They still

occasionally beat a man for going into a mosque, but this is almost the only sign of ferocious vitality left in the Turk of the Mediterranean coast, and strangers may enter scores of mosques without molestation. The paddle-wheel is the great conqueror. Wherever the captain cries "Stop her!" Civilisation stops, and lands in the ship's boat, and makes a permanent acquaintance with the savages on shore. Whole hosts of crusaders have passed and died, and butchered here in vain. But to manufacture European iron into pikes and helmets was a waste of metal: in the shape of piston-rods and furnace-pokers it is irresistible; and I think an allegory might be made showing how much stronger commerce is than chivalry, and finishing with a grand image of Mahomet's crescent being extinguished in Fulton's boiler.

This I thought was the moral of the day's sights and adventures. We pulled off to the steamer in the afternoon—the Inbat blowing fresh, and setting all the craft in the gulf dancing over its blue waters. We were presently under way again, the captain ordering his engines to work only at half power, so that a French steamer which was quitting Smyrna at the same time might come up with us, and fancy she could beat the irresistible "Tagus." Vain hope! Just as the Frenchman neared us, the "Tagus" shot out like an arrow, and the discomfited Frenchman went behind. Though we all relished the joke exceedingly, there was a French gentleman on board who did not seem to be by any means tickled with it; but he had received papers at Smyrna, containing news of Marshal Bugeaud's victory at Isly, and had this land victory to set against our harmless little triumph at sea.

That night we rounded the island of Mitylene: and the next day the coast of Troy was in sight, and the tomb of Achilles—a dismal-looking mound that rises in a low dreary barren shore—less lively and not more picturesque than the Scheldt or the mouth of the Thames. Then we passed Tenedos and the forts and town at the mouth of the Dardanelles. The weather was not too hot, the water as smooth as at Putney, and everybody happy and excited at the thought of seeing Constantinople to-morrow. We had music on board all the way from Smyrna. A German commis-voyageur, with a guitar, who had passed unnoticed until that time, produced his instrument about mid-day, and began to whistle waltzes. He whistled so divinely that the ladies left their cabins, and men laid down their books. He

whistled a polka so bewitchingly that two young Oxford men began whirling round the deck, and performed that popular dance with much agility until they sank down tired. He still continued an unabated whistling, and as nobody would dance, pulled off his coat, produced a pair of castanets, and whistling a mazurka, performed it with tremendous agility. His whistling made everybody gay and happy—made those acquainted who had not spoken before, and inspired such a feeling of hilarity in the ship, that that night, as we floated over the Sea of Marmora, a general vote was expressed for broiled bones and a regular supper-party. Punch was brewed, and speeches were made, and, after a lapse of fifteen years, I heard the "Old English Gentleman" and "Bright Chanticleer proclaims the Morn," sung in such style that you would almost fancy the proctors must hear, and send us all home.

CHAPTER VII.

Constantinople.

WHEN we rose at sunrise to see the famous entry to Constantinople, we found, in the place of the city and the sun, a bright white fog, which hid both from sight, and which only disappeared as the vessel advanced towards the Golden Horn. There the fog cleared off as it were by flakes, and as you see gauze curtains lifted away, one by one, before a great fairy scene at the theatre. This will give idea enough of the fog; the difficulty is to describe the scene afterwards, which was in truth the great fairy scene, than which it is impossible to conceive anything more brilliant and magnificent. I can't go to any more romantic place than Drury Lane to draw my similes from—Drury Lane, such as we used to see it in our youth, when to our sight the grand last pictures of the melodrama or pantomime were as magnificent as any objects of nature we have seen with maturer eyes. Well, the view of Constantinople is as fine as any of Stanfield's best theatrical pictures, seen at the best period of youth, when fancy had all the bloom on her—when all the heroines who danced before the scene appeared as ravishing beauties, when there shone an unearthly splendour about Baker and Diddear—and the sound of the bugles and fiddles, and the

cheerful clang of the cymbals, as the scene unrolled, and the gorgeous procession meandered triumphantly through it—caused a thrill of pleasure, and awakened an innocent fulness of sensual enjoyment that is only given to boys.

The above sentence contains the following propositions :—The enjoyments of boyish fancy are the most intense and delicious in the world. Stanfield's panorama used to be the realisation of the most intense youthful fancy. I puzzle my brains and find no better likeness for the place. The view of Constantinople resembles the *ne plus ultra* of a Stanfield diorama, with a glorious accompaniment of music, spangled houris, warriors, and winding processions, feasting the eyes and the soul with light, splendour, and harmony. If you were never in this way during your youth ravished at the playhouse, of course the whole comparison is useless : and you have no idea, from this description, of the effect which Constantinople produces on the mind. But if you were never affected by a theatre, no words can work upon your fancy, and typographical attempts to move it are of no use. For, suppose we combine mosque, minaret, gold, cypress, water, blue, caïques, seventy-four, Galata, Tophana, Ramazan, Backallum, and so forth, together, in ever so many ways, your imagination will never be able to depict a city out of them. Or, suppose I say the Mosque of St. Sophia is four hundred and seventy-three feet in height, measuring from the middle nail of the gilt crescent surmounting the dome to the ring in the centre stone ; the circle of the dome is one hundred and twenty-three feet in diameter, the windows ninety-seven in number—and all this may be true, for anything I know to the contrary : yet who is to get an idea of St. Sophia from dates, proper names, and calculations with a measuring-line? It can't be done by giving the age and measurement of all the buildings along the river, the names of all the boatmen who ply on it. Has your fancy, which pooh-poohs a simile, faith enough to build a city with a foot-rule? Enough said about descriptions and similes (though whenever I am uncertain of one I am naturally most anxious to fight for it) : it is a scene not perhaps sublime, but charming, magnificent, and cheerful beyond any I have ever seen—the most superb combination of city and gardens, domes and shipping, hills and water, with the healthiest breeze blowing over it, and above it the brightest and most cheerful sky.

It is proper, they say, to be disappointed on entering the town, or any of the various quarters of it, because the houses are not so magnificent on inspection and seen singly as they are when beheld *en masse* from the waters. But why form expectations so lofty? If you see a group of peasants picturesquely disposed at a fair, you don't suppose that they are all faultless beauties, or that the men's coats have no rags, and the women's gowns are made of silk and velvet: the wild ugliness of the interior of Constantinople or Pera has a charm of its own, greatly more amusing than rows of red bricks or drab stones, however symmetrical. With brick or stone they could never form those fantastic ornaments, railings, balconies, roofs, galleries, which jut in and out of the rugged houses of the city. As we went from Galata to Pera up a steep hill, which newcomers ascend with some difficulty, but which a porter, with a couple of hundredweight on his back, paces up without turning a hair, I thought the wooden houses far from being disagreeable objects, sights quite as surprising and striking as the grand one we had just left.

I do not know how the custom-house of His Highness is made to be a profitable speculation. As I left the ship, a man pulled after my boat, and asked for backsheesh, which was given him to the amount of about twopence. He was a custom-house officer, but I doubt whether this sum which he levied ever went to the revenue.

I can fancy the scene about the quays somewhat to resemble the river of London in olden times, before coal-smoke had darkened the whole city with soot, and when, according to the old writers, there really was bright weather. The fleets of caïques bustling along the shore, or scudding over the blue water, are beautiful to look at: in Hollar's print London river is so studded over with wherry-boats, which bridges and steamers have since destroyed. Here the caïque is still in full perfection: there are thirty thousand boats of the kind plying between the cities; every boat is neat, and trimly carved and painted; and I scarcely saw a man pulling in one of them that was not a fine specimen of his race, brawny and brown, with an open chest and a handsome face. They wear a thin shirt of exceedingly light cotton, which leaves their fine brown limbs full play; and with a purple sea for a background, every one of these dashing boats forms a brilliant and glittering picture. Passengers squat in the

inside of the boat; so that as it passes you see little more than the heads of the true believers, with their red fez and blue tassel, and that placid gravity of expression which the sucking of a tobacco-pipe is sure to give to a man.

The Bosphorus is enlivened by a multiplicity of other kinds of craft. There are the dirty men-of-war's boats of the Russians, with unwashed mangy crews; the great ferry-boats carrying hundreds of passengers to the villages; the melon-boats piled up

with enormous golden fruit; His Excellency the Pasha's boat, with twelve men bending to their oars; and His Highness's own caïque, with a head like a serpent, and eight-and-twenty tugging oarsmen, that goes shooting by amidst the thundering of the cannon. Ships and steamers, with black sides and flaunting colours, are moored everywhere, showing their flags, Russian and English, Austrian, American, and Greek; and along the quays country ships from the Black Sea or the islands, with high carved poops and bows, such as you see in the pictures of

the shipping of the seventeenth century. The vast groves and towers, domes and quays, tall minarets and spired spreading mosques of the three cities, rise all around in endless magnificence and variety, and render this water-street a scene of such delightful liveliness and beauty, that one never tires of looking at it. I lost a great number of the sights in and round Constantinople through the beauty of this admirable scene: but what are sights after all? and isn't that the best sight which makes you most happy?

We were lodged at Pera at Misseri's Hotel, the host of which has been made famous ere this time by the excellent book "Eothen,"—a work for which all the passengers on board our ship had been battling, and which had charmed all—from our great statesman, our polished lawyer, our young Oxonian, who sighed over certain passages that he feared were wicked, down to the writer of this, who, after perusing it with delight, laid it down with wonder, exclaiming, "Aut Diabolus aut"—a book which has since (greatest miracle of all) excited a feeling of warmth and admiration in the bosom of the godlike, impartial, stony *Athenæum*. Misseri, the faithful and chivalrous Tartar, is transformed into the most quiet and gentlemanlike of landlords, a great deal more gentlemanlike in manner and appearance than most of us who sat at his table, and smoked cool pipes on his house-top, as we looked over the hill and the Russian palace to the water, and the Seraglio gardens shining in the blue. We confronted Misseri, "Eothen" in hand, and found, on examining him, that it *was* "aut Diabolus aut amicus"—but the name is a secret: I will never breathe it, though I am dying to tell it.

The last good description of a Turkish bath, I think, was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's—which voluptuous picture must have been painted at least a hundred and thirty years ago; so that another sketch may be attempted by a humbler artist in a different manner. The Turkish bath is certainly a novel sensation to an Englishman, and may be set down as a most queer and surprising event of his life. I made the valet-de-place or dragoman (it is rather a fine thing to have a dragoman in one's service) conduct me forthwith to the best appointed hummums in the neighbourhood; and we walked to a house at Tophana, and into a spacious hall lighted from above, which is the cooling-room of the bath.

The spacious hall has a large fountain in the midst, a painted gallery running round it ; and many ropes stretched from one gallery to another, ornamented with profuse draperies of towels and blue cloths, for the use of the frequenters of the place. All round the room and the galleries were matted inclosures, fitted with numerous neat beds and cushions for reposing on, where lay a dozen of true believers smoking, or sleeping, or in the happy half-dozing state. I was led up to one of these beds, to rather a retired corner, in consideration of my modesty ; and to the next bed presently came a dancing dervish, who forthwith began to prepare for the bath.

When the dancing dervish had taken off his yellow sugar-loaf cap, his gown, shawl, &c., he was arrayed in two large blue cloths ; a white one being thrown over his shoulders, and another in the shape of a turban plaited neatly round his head ; the garments of which he divested himself were folded up in another linen, and neatly put by. I beg leave to state I was treated in precisely the same manner as the dancing dervish.

The reverend gentleman then put on a pair of wooden pattens, which elevated him about six inches from the ground ; and walked down the stairs, and paddled across the moist marble floor of the hall, and in at a little door, by the which also Titmarsh entered. But I had none of the professional agility of the dancing dervish ; I staggered about very ludicrously upon the high wooden pattens ; and should have been down on my nose several times, had not the dragoman and the master of the bath supported me down the stairs and across the hall. Dressed in three large cotton napkins, with a white turban round my head, I thought of Pall Mall with a sort of despair. I passed the little door, it was closed behind me—I was in the dark—I couldn't speak the language—in a white turban. Mon Dieu ! what was going to happen ?

The dark room was the tepidarium, a moist oozing arched den, with a light faintly streaming from an orifice in the domed ceiling. Yells of frantic laughter and song came booming and clanging through the echoing arches, the doors clapped to with loud reverberations. It was the laughter of the followers of Mahound, rollicking and taking their pleasure in the public bath. I could not go into that place : I swore I would not ; they promised me a private room, and the dragoman left me. My agony at parting from that Christian cannot be described.

When you get into the sudarium, or hot room, your first sensations only occur about half a minute after entrance, when you feel that you are choking. I found myself in that state, seated on a marble slab; the bath man was gone; he had taken away the cotton turban and shoulder shawl: I saw I was in a narrow room of marble, with a vaulted roof, and a fountain of warm and cold water; the atmosphere was in a steam, the choking sensation went off, and I felt a sort of pleasure presently in a soft boiling simmer, which, no doubt, potatoes feel when they are steaming. You are left in this state for about ten minutes: it is warm certainly, but odd and pleasant, and disposes the mind to reverie.

But let any delicate mind in Baker Street fancy my horror when, on looking up out of this reverie, I saw a great brown wretch extended before me, only half dressed, standing on pattens, and exaggerated by them and the steam until he looked like an ogre, grinning in the most horrible way, and waving his arm, on which was a horsehair glove. He spoke, in his unknown nasal jargon, words which echoed through the arched room; his eyes seemed astonishingly large and bright, his ears stuck out, and his head was all shaved, except a bristling top-knot, which gave it a demoniac fierceness.

This description, I feel, is growing too frightful; ladies who read it will be going into hysterics, or saying, "Well, upon my word, this is the most singular, the most extraordinary kind of language. Jane, my love, you will not read that odious book"—— and so I will be brief. This grinning man belabours the patient violently with the horse-brush. When he has completed the horsehair part, and you lie expiring under a squirting fountain of warm water, and fancying all is done, he reappears with a large brass basin, containing a quantity of lather, in the midst of which is something like old Miss MacWhirter's flaxen wig that she is so proud of, and that we have all laughed at. Just as you are going to remonstrate, the thing like the wig is dashed into your face and eyes, covered over with soap, and for five minutes you are drowned in lather: you can't see, the suds are frothing over your eyeballs; you can't hear, the soap is whizzing into your ears; can't gasp for breath, Miss MacWhirter's wig is down your throat with half a pailful of suds in an instant—you are all soap. Wicked children in former days have jeered you, exclaiming, "How are you off for soap?"

You little knew what saponacity was till you entered a Turkish bath.

When the whole operation is concluded, you are led—with what heartfelt joy I need not say—softly back to the cooling-room, having been robed in shawls and turbans as before. You are laid gently on the reposing bed ; somebody brings a narghilé, which tastes as tobacco must taste in Mahomet's Paradise ; a cool sweet dreamy languor takes possession of the purified frame ; and half-an-hour of such delicious laziness is spent over the pipe as is unknown in Europe, where vulgar prejudice has most shamefully maligned indolence—calls it foul names, such as the father of all evil, and the like ; in fact, does not know how to educate idleness as those honest Turks do, and the fruit which, when properly cultivated, it bears.

The after-bath state is the most delightful condition of laziness I ever knew, and I tried it wherever we went afterwards on our little tour. At Smyrna the whole business was much inferior to the method employed in the capital. At Cairo, after the soap, you are plunged into a sort of stone coffin, full of water which is all but boiling. This has its charms ; but I could not relish the Egyptian shampooing. A hideous old blind man (but very dexterous in his art) tried to break my back and dislocate my shoulders, but I could not see the pleasure of the practice ; and another fellow began tickling the soles of my feet, but I rewarded him with a kick that sent him off the bench. The pure idleness is the best, and I shall never enjoy such in Europe again.

Victor Hugo, in his famous travels on the Rhine, visiting Cologne, gives a learned account of what he *didn't* see there. I have a remarkable catalogue of similar objects at Constantinople. I didn't see the dancing dervishes, it was Ramazan ; nor the howling dervishes at Scutari, it was Ramazan ; nor the interior of St. Sophia, nor the women's apartment of the Seraglio, nor the fashionable promenade at the Sweet Waters, always because it was Ramazan ; during which period the dervishes dance and howl but rarely, their legs and lungs being unequal to much exertion during a fast of fifteen hours. On account of the same holy season, the Royal palaces and mosques are shut ; and though the Valley of the Sweet Waters is there, no one goes to walk ; the people remaining asleep all day, and passing the night in feasting and carousing. The minarets are illuminated at this season ; even the humblest mosque at Jerusalem, or Jaffa,

mounted a few circles of dingy lamps ; those of the capital were handsomely lighted with many festoons of lamps, which had a fine effect from the water. I need not mention other and constant illuminations of the city, which innumerable travellers have described—I mean the fires. There were three in Pera during our eight days' stay there ; but they did not last long enough to bring the Sultan out of bed to come and lend his aid. Mr. Hobhouse (quoted in the "Guide-book") says, if a fire lasts an hour the Sultan is bound to attend it in person ; and that people having petitions to present, have often set houses on fire for the purpose of forcing out this Royal trump. The Sultan can't lead a very "jolly life," if this rule be universal. Fancy His Highness, in the midst of his moon-faced beauties, handkerchief in hand, and obliged to tie it round his face, and go out of his warm harem at midnight at the cursed cry of "Yang en Var!"

We saw His Highness in the midst of his people and their petitions, when he came to the mosque at Tophana ; not the largest, but one of the most picturesque of the public buildings of the city. The streets were crowded with people watching for the august arrival, and lined with the squat military in their bastard European costume ; the sturdy police, with bandeliers and brown surtouts, keeping order, driving off the faithful from the railings of the Esplanade through which their Emperor was to pass, and only admitting (with a very unjust partiality, I thought) us Europeans into that reserved space. Before the august arrival, numerous officers collected, colonels and pashas went by with their attendant running footmen ; the most active, insolent, and hideous of these great men, as I thought, being His Highness's black eunuchs, who went prancing through the crowd, which separated before them with every sign of respect.

The common women were assembled by many hundreds : the yakmac, a muslin chin-cloth which they wear, makes almost every face look the same ; but the eyes and noses of these beauties are generally visible, and, for the most part, both these features are good. The jolly negresses wear the same white veil, but they are by no means so particular about hiding the charms of their good-natured black faces, and they let the cloth blow about as it lists, and grin unconfined. Wherever we went the negroes seemed happy. They have the organ of child-loving : little creatures were always prattling on their shoulders, queer little things in night-gowns of yellow dimity, with great

flowers, and pink or red or yellow shawls, with great eyes glistening underneath. Of such the black women seemed always the happy guardians. I saw one at a fountain, holding one child in her arms, and giving another a drink—a ragged little beggar—a sweet and touching picture of a black charity.

I am almost forgetting His Highness the Sultan. About a hundred guns were fired off at clumsy intervals from the Esplanade facing the Bosphorus, warning us that the monarch had set off from his Summer Palace, and was on the way to his grand canoe. At last that vessel made its appearance; the band struck up his favourite air; his caparisoned horse was led down to the shore to receive him; the eunuchs, fat pashas, colonels, and officers of state gathering round as the Commander of the Faithful mounted. I had the indescribable happiness of seeing him at a very short distance. The Padishah, or Father of all the Sovereigns on earth, has not that majestic air which some sovereigns possess, and which makes the beholder's eyes wink, and his knees tremble under him; he has a black beard, and a handsome well-bred face, of a French cast; he looks like a young French *roué* worn out by debauch; his eyes bright, with black rings round them; his cheeks pale and hollow. He was lolling on his horse as if he could hardly hold himself on the saddle: or as if his cloak, fastened with a blazing diamond clasp on his breast, and falling over his horse's tail, pulled him back. But the handsome sallow face of the Refuge of the World looked decidedly interesting and intellectual. I have seen many a young Don Juan at Paris, behind a counter, with such a beard and countenance; the flame of passion still burning in his hollow eyes, while on his damp brow was stamped the fatal mark of premature decay. The man we saw cannot live many summers. Women and wine are said to have brought the Zilullah to this state; and it is whispered by the dragomans, or laquais-de-place (from whom travellers at Constantinople generally get their political information), that the Sultan's mother and his ministers conspire to keep him plunged in sensuality, that they may govern the kingdom according to their own fancies. Mr. Urquhart, I am sure, thinks that Lord Palmerston has something to do with the business, and drugs the Sultan's champagne for the benefit of Russia.

As the Pontiff of Mussulmans passed into the mosque, a

shower of petitions was flung from the steps where the crowd was collected, and over the heads of the gendarmes in brown. A general cry, as for justice, rose up: and one old ragged woman came forward and burst through the throng, howling, and flinging about her lean arms, and baring her old shrunken breast. I never saw a finer action of tragic woe, or heard sounds more pitiful than those old passionate groans of hers. What was your prayer, poor old wretched soul? The gendarmes hemmed her round, and hustled her away, but rather kindly. The Padishah went on quite impassible—the picture of debauch and ennui.

I like pointing morals, and inventing for myself cheap consolations, to reconcile me to that state of life into which it has pleased Heaven to call me; and as the Light of the World disappeared round the corner, I reasoned pleasantly with myself about His Highness, and enjoyed that secret selfish satisfaction a man has, who sees he is better off than his neighbour. "Michael Angelo," I said, "you are still (by courtesy) young: if you had five hundred thousand a year, and were a great prince, I would lay a wager that men would discover in you a magnificent courtesy of demeanour, and a majestic presence that only belongs to the sovereigns of the world. If you had such an income, you think you could spend it with splendour: distributing genial hospitalities, kindly alms, soothing misery, bidding humility be of good heart, rewarding desert. If you had such means of purchasing pleasure, you think, you rogue, you could relish it with gusto. But fancy being brought to the condition of the poor Light of the Universe yonder; and reconcile yourself with the idea that you are only a farthing rushlight. The cries of the poor widow fall as dead upon him as the smiles of the brightest eyes out of Georgia. He can't stir abroad but those abominable cannon begin roaring and deafening his ears. He can't see the world but over the shoulders of a row of fat pashas, and eunuchs, with their infernal ugliness. His ears can never be regaled with a word of truth, or blessed with an honest laugh. The only privilege of manhood left to him, he enjoys but for a month in the year, at this time of Ramazan, when he is forced to fast for fifteen hours; and, by consequence, has the blessing of feeling hungry." Sunset during Lent appears to be his single moment of pleasure; they say the poor fellow is ravenous by that time, and as the gun

fires the dish-covers are taken off, so that for five minutes a day he lives and is happy over pillau, like another mortal.

And yet, when floating by the Summer Palace, a barbaric edifice of wood and marble, with gilded suns blazing over the porticoes, and all sorts of strange ornaments and trophies figuring on the gates and railings—when we passed a long row of barred and filigreed windows, looking on the water—when we were told that those were the apartments of His Highness's ladies, and actually heard them whispering and laughing behind the bars—a strange feeling of curiosity came over some ill-regulated minds—just to have *one* peep, one look at all those wondrous beauties, singing to the dulcimers, paddling in the fountains, dancing in the marble halls, or lolling on the golden cushions, as the gaudy black slaves brought pipes and coffee. This tumultuous movement was calmed by thinking of that dreadful statement of travellers, that in one of the most elegant halls there is a trap-door, on peeping below which you may see the Bosphorus running underneath, into which some luckless beauty is plunged occasionally, and the trap-door is shut, and the dancing and the singing, and the smoking and the laughing go on as before. They say it is death to pick up any of the sacks thereabouts, if a stray one should float by you. There were none any day when I passed, *at least, on the surface of the water*.

It has been rather a fashion of our travellers to apologise for Turkish life, of late, and paint glowing agreeable pictures of many of its institutions. The celebrated author of "Palm-Leaves" (his name is famous under the date-trees of the Nile, and uttered with respect beneath the tents of the Bedaween) has touchingly described Ibrahim Pasha's paternal fondness, who cut off a black slave's head for having dropped and maimed one of his children; and has penned a melodious panegyric of "The Harem," and of the fond and beautiful duties of the inmates of that place of love, obedience, and seclusion. I saw, at the mausoleum of the late Sultan Mahmoud's family, a good subject for a Ghazul, in the true new Oriental manner.

These Royal burial-places are the resort of the pious Moslems. Lamps are kept burning there; and in the ante-chambers, copies of the Koran are provided for the use of believers; and you never pass these cemeteries but you see Turks washing at the cisterns, previous to entering for prayer, or squatted on the

benches, chanting passages from the sacred volume. Christians, I believe, are not admitted, but may look through the bars, and see the coffins of the defunct monarchs and children of the Royal race. Each lies in his narrow sarcophagus, which is commonly flanked by huge candles, and covered with a rich embroidered pall. At the head of each coffin rises a slab, with a gilded inscription; for the princesses, the slab is simple, not unlike our own monumental stones. The headstones of the tombs of the defunct princes are decorated with a turban, or, since the introduction of the latter article of dress, with the red fez. That of Mahmoud is decorated with the imperial aigrette.

In this dismal but splendid museum, I remarked two little tombs with little red fezzes, very small, and for very young heads evidently, which were lying under the little embroidered palls of state. I forget whether they had candles too; but their little flame of life was soon extinguished, and there was no need of many pounds of wax to typify it. These were the tombs of Mahmoud's grandsons, nephews of the present Light of the Universe, and children of his sister, the wife of Halil Pasha. Little children die in all ways: these of the much-maligned Mahometan Royal race perished by the bowstring. Sultan Mahmoud (may he rest in glory!) strangled the one; but, having some spark of human feeling, was so moved by the wretchedness and agony of the poor bereaved mother, his daughter, that his Royal heart relented towards her, and he promised that, should she ever have another child, it should be allowed to live. He died; and Abdul Medjid (may his name be blessed!), the debauched young man whom we just saw riding to the mosque, succeeded. His sister, whom he is said to have loved, became again a mother, and had a son. But she relied upon her father's word and her august brother's love, and hoped that this little one should be spared. The same accursed hand tore this infant out of its mother's bosom, and killed it. The poor woman's heart broke outright at this second calamity, and she died. But on her death-bed she sent for her brother, rebuked him as a perjurer and an assassin, and expired calling down the divine justice on his head. She lies now by the side of the two little fezzes.

Now I say this would be a fine subject for an Oriental poem. The details are dramatic and noble, and could be grandly touched by a fine artist. If the mother had borne a daughter

the child would have been safe; that perplexity might be pathetically depicted as agitating the bosom of the young wife about to become a mother. A son is born: you can see her despair and the pitiful look she casts on the child, and the way in which she hugs it every time the curtains of her door are removed. The Sultan hesitated probably; he allowed the infant to live for six weeks. He could not bring his Royal soul to inflict pain. He yields at last; he is a martyr—to be pitied, not to be blamed. If he melts at his daughter's agony, he is a man and a father. There are men and fathers too in the much-maligned Orient.

Then comes the second act of the tragedy. The new hopes, the fond yearnings, the terrified misgivings, the timid belief, and weak confidence; the child that is born—and dies smiling prettily—and the mother's heart is rent so, that it can love, or hope, or suffer no more. Allah is God! She sleeps by the little fezzes. Hark! the guns are booming over the water, and His Highness is coming from his prayers.

After the murder of that little child, it seems to me one can never look with anything but horror upon the butcherly Herod who ordered it. The death of the seventy thousand Janissaries ascends to historic dignity, and takes rank as war. But a great Prince and Light of the Universe, who procures abortions and throttles little babies, dwindles away into such a frightful insignificance of crime, that those may respect him who will. I pity their Excellencies the Ambassadors, who are obliged to smirk and cringe to such a rascal. To do the Turks justice—and two days' walk in Constantinople will settle this fact as well as a year's residence in the city—the people do not seem in the least animated by this Herodian spirit. I never saw more kindness to children than among all classes, more fathers walking about with little solemn Mahometans in red caps and big trousers, more business going on than in the toy quarter, and in the Atmeidan. Although you may see there the Thebaic stone set up by the Emperor Theodosius, and the bronze column of serpents which Murray says was brought from Delphi, but which my guide informed me was the very one exhibited by Moses in the Wilderness, yet I found the examination of these antiquities much less pleasant than to look at the many troops of children assembled on the plain to play; and to watch them as they were dragged about in little queer arobas, or painted carriages,

which are there kept for hire. I have a picture of one of them now in my eyes: a little green oval machine, with flowers rudely painted round the window, out of which two smiling heads are peeping, the pictures of happiness. An old, good-humoured, grey-bearded Turk is tugging the cart; and behind it walks a lady in a yakmac and yellow slippers, and a black female slave, grinning as usual, towards whom the little coach-riders are looking. A small sturdy barefooted Mussulman is examining the cart with some feelings of envy: he is too poor to purchase a ride for himself and the round-faced puppy-dog, which he is hugging in his arms as young ladies in our country do dolls.

All the neighbourhood of the Atmeidan is exceedingly picturesque—the mosque court and cloister, where the Persians have their stalls of sweetmeats and tobacco; a superb sycamore-tree grows in the middle of this, overshadowing an aromatic fountain; great flocks of pigeons are settling in corners of the cloister, and barley is sold at the gates, with which the good-natured people feed them. From the Atmeidan you have a fine view of St. Sophia: and here stands a mosque which struck me as being much more picturesque and sumptuous—the Mosque of Sultan Achmed, with its six gleaming white minarets and its beautiful courts and trees. Any infidels may enter the court without molestation, and, looking through the barred windows of the mosque, have a view of its airy and spacious interior. A small audience of women was collected there when I looked in, squatted on the mats, and listening to a preacher, who was walking among them, and speaking with great energy. My dragoman interpreted to me the sense of a few words of his sermon: he was warning them of the danger of gadding about to public places, and of the immorality of too much talking; and, I dare say, we might have had more valuable information from him regarding the follies of womankind, had not a tall Turk clapped my interpreter on the shoulder, and pointed him to be off.

Although the ladies are veiled, and muffled with the ugliest dresses in the world, yet it appears their modesty is alarmed in spite of all the coverings which they wear. One day, in the bazaar, a fat old body, with diamond rings on her fingers, that were tinged with henné of a logwood colour, came to the shop where I was purchasing slippers, with her son, a young Aga of six years of age, dressed in a braided frock-coat, with a huge

tassel to his fez, exceeding fat, and of a most solemn demeanour. The young Aga came for a pair of shoes, and his contortions were so delightful as he tried them, that I remained looking on with great pleasure, wishing for Leech to be at hand to sketch his lordship and his fat mamma, who sat on the counter. That lady fancied I was looking at her, though, as far as I could see, she had the figure and complexion of a roly-poly pudding; and so, with quite a premature bashfulness, she sent me a message by the shoemaker, ordering me to walk away if I had made my purchases, for that ladies of her rank did not choose to be stared at by strangers; and I was obliged to take my leave, though with sincere regret, for the little lord had just squeezed himself into an attitude than which I never saw anything more ludicrous in General Tom Thumb. When the ladies of the Seraglio come to that bazaar with their *cortège* of infernal black eunuchs, strangers are told to move on briskly. I saw a bevy of about eight of these, with their aides-de-camp; but they were wrapped up, and looked just as vulgar and ugly as the other women, and were not, I suppose, of the most beautiful sort. The poor devils are allowed to come out, half-a-dozen times in the year, to spend their little wretched allowance of pocket-money in purchasing trinkets and tobacco; all the rest of the time they pursue the beautiful duties of their existence in the walls of the sacred harem.

Though strangers are not allowed to see the interior of the cage in which these birds of Paradise are confined, yet many parts of the Seraglio are free to the curiosity of visitors, who choose to drop a backsheesh here and there. I landed one morning at the Seraglio point from Galata, close by an ancient pleasure-house of the defunct Sultan; a vast broad-brimmed pavilion, that looks agreeable enough to be a dancing room for ghosts now: there is another summer-house, the Guide-book cheerfully says, whither the Sultan goes to sport with his women and *mutes*. A regiment of infantry, with their music at their head, were marching to exercise in the outer grounds of the Seraglio; and we followed them, and had an opportunity of seeing their evolutions, and hearing their bands, upon a fine green plain under the Seraglio walls, where stands one solitary column, erected in memory of some triumph of some Byzantian emperor.

There were three battalions of the Turkish infantry, exercising

here; and they seemed to perform their evolutions in a very satisfactory manner: that is, they fired all together, and charged and halted in very straight lines, and bit off imaginary cartridge-tops with great fierceness and regularity, and made all their ramrods ring to measure, just like so many Christians. The men looked small, young, clumsy, and ill-built; uncomfortable in their shabby European clothes; and about the legs, especially, seemed exceedingly weak and ill-formed. Some score of military invalids were lolling in the sunshine, about a fountain and a marble summer-house that stand on the ground, watching their comrades' manœuvres (as if they could never have enough of that delightful pastime); and these sick were much better cared for than their healthy companions. Each man had two dressing-gowns, one of white cotton, and an outer wrapper of warm brown woollen. Their heads were accommodated with wadded cotton nightcaps; and it seemed to me, from their condition and from the excellent character of the military hospitals, that it would be much more wholesome to be ill than to be well in the Turkish service.

Facing this green esplanade, and the Bosphorus shining beyond it, rise the great walls of the outer Seraglio Gardens: huge masses of ancient masonry, over which peep the roofs of numerous kiosks and outhouses, amongst thick evergreens, planted so as to hide the beautiful frequenters of the place from the prying eyes and telescopes. We could not catch a glance of a single figure moving in these great pleasure-grounds. The road winds round the walls; and the outer park, which is likewise planted with trees, and diversified by garden-plots and cottages, had more the air of the outbuildings of a homely English park, than of a palace which we must all have imagined to be the most stately in the world. The most commonplace water-carts were passing here and there; roads were being repaired in the Macadamite manner; and carpenters were mending the park-palings, just as they do in Hampshire. The next thing you might fancy would be the Sultan walking out with a spud and a couple of dogs, on the way to meet the post-bag and the *Saint James's Chronicle*.

The palace is no palace at all. It is a great town of pavilions, built without order, here and there, according to the fancy of succeeding Lights of the Universe, or their favourites. The only row of domes which looked particularly regular or stately, were

the kitchens. As you examined the buildings they had a ruinous dilapidated look: they are not furnished, it is said, with particular splendour,—not a bit more elegantly than Miss Jones's seminary for young ladies, which we may be sure is much more comfortable than the extensive establishment of His Highness Abdul Medjid.

In the little stable I thought to see some marks of Royal magnificence, and some horses worthy of the king of all kings. But the sultan is said to be a very timid horseman: the animal that is always kept saddled for him did not look to be worth twenty pounds; and the rest of the horses in the shabby dirty stalls were small, ill-kept, common-looking brutes. You might see better, it seemed to me, at a country inn stable on any market-day.

The kitchens are the most sublime part of the Seraglio. There are nine of these great halls, for all ranks, from His Highness downwards, where many hecatombs are roasted daily, according to the accounts, and where cooking goes on with a savage Homeric grandeur. Chimneys are despised in these primitive halls; so that the roofs are black with the smoke of hundreds of furnaces, which escapes through apertures in the domes above. These, too, give the chief light in the rooms, which streams downwards, and thickens and mingles with the smoke, and so murkily lights up hundreds of swarthy figures busy about the spits and the cauldrons. Close to the door by which we entered they were making pastry for the sultanas; and the chief pastry-cook, who knew my guide, invited us courteously to see the process, and partake of the delicacies prepared for those charming lips. How those sweet lips must shine after eating these puffs! First, huge sheets of dough are rolled out till the paste is about as thin as silver paper: then an artist forms the dough-muslin into a sort of drapery, curling it round and round in many fanciful and pretty shapes, until it is all got into the circumference of a round metal tray in which it is baked. Then the cake is drenched in grease most profusely; and, finally, a quantity of syrup is poured over it, when the delectable mixture is complete. The moon-faced ones are said to devour immense quantities of this wholesome food; and, in fact, are eating grease and sweatmeats from morning till night. I don't like to think what the consequences may be, or allude to the agonies which the delicate creatures must inevitably suffer.

The good-natured chief pastrycook filled a copper basin with greasy puffs; and, dipping a dubious ladle into a large cauldron, containing several gallons of syrup, poured a liberal portion over the cakes, and invited us to eat. One of the tarts was quite enough for me: and I excused myself on the plea of ill-health from imbibing any more grease and sugar. But my companion, the dragoman, finished some forty puffs in a twinkling. They slipped down his opened jaws as the sausages do down clowns' throats in a pantomime. His moustaches shone with grease, and it dripped down his beard and fingers. We thanked the smiling chief pastrycook, and rewarded him handsomely for the tarts. It is something to have eaten of the dainties prepared for the ladies of the harem; but I think Mr. Cockle ought to get the names of the chief sultanas among the exalted patrons of his antibilious pills.

From the kitchens we passed into the second court of the Seraglio, beyond which is death. The Guide-book only hints at the dangers which would befall a stranger caught prying in the mysterious *first* court of the palace. I have read "Bluebeard," and don't care for peeping into forbidden doors; so that the second court was quite enough for me; the pleasure of beholding it being heightened, as it were, by the notion of the invisible danger sitting next door, with uplifted scimitar ready to fall on you—present though not seen.

A cloister runs along one side of this court; opposite is the hall of the divan, "large but low, covered with lead, and gilt, after the Moorish manner, plain enough." The Grand Vizier sits in this place, and the ambassadors used to wait here, and be conducted hence on horseback, attired with robes of honour. But the ceremony is now, I believe, discontinued; the English envoy, at any rate, is not allowed to receive any backsheesh, and goes away as he came, in the habit of his own nation. On the right is a door leading into the interior of the Seraglio; *none pass through it but such as are sent for*, the Guide-book says: it is impossible to top the terror of that description.

About this door lads and servants were lolling, ichoglans and pages, with lazy looks and shabby dresses; and among them, sunning himself sulkily on a bench, a poor old fat, wrinkled, dismal white eunuch, with little fat white hands, and a great head sunk into his chest, and two sprawling little legs that seemed incapable to hold up his bloated old body. He squeaked

out some surly reply to my friend the dragoman, who, softened and sweetened by the tarts he had just been devouring, was, no doubt, anxious to be polite: and the poor worthy fellow walked away rather crestfallen at this return of his salutation, and hastened me out of the place.

The palace of the Seraglio, the cloister with marble pillars, the hall of the ambassadors, the impenetrable gate guarded by eunuchs and Ichoglans, have a romantic look in print; but not so in reality. Most of the marble is wood, almost all the gilding is faded, the guards are shabby, the foolish perspectives painted on the walls are half cracked off. The place looks like Vauxhall in the daytime.

We passed out of the second court under THE SUBLIME PORTE—which is like a fortified gate of a German town of the middle ages—into the outer court, round which are public offices, hospitals, and dwellings of the multifarious servants of the palace. This place is very wide and picturesque: there is a pretty church of Byzantine architecture at the further end; and in the midst of the court a magnificent plane-tree, of prodigious dimensions and fabulous age according to the guides; St. Sophia towers in the further distance: and from here, perhaps, is the best view of its light swelling domes and beautiful proportions. The Porte itself, too, forms an excellent subject for the sketcher, if the officers of the court will permit him to design it. I made the attempt, and a couple of Turkish beadles looked on very good-naturedly for some time at the progress of the drawing; but a good number of other spectators speedily joined them, and made a crowd, which is not permitted, it would seem, in the Seraglio; so I was told to pack up my portfolio, and remove the cause of the disturbance, and lost my drawing of the Ottoman Porte.

I don't think I have anything more to say about the city which has not been much better told by graver travellers. I, with them, could see (perhaps it was the preaching of the politicians that warned me of the fact) that we are looking on at the last days of an empire; and heard many stories of weakness, disorder, and oppression. I even saw a Turkish lady drive up to Sultan Achmet's mosque *in a brougham*. Is not that a subject to moralise upon? And might one not draw endless conclusions from it, that the knell of the Turkish dominion is rung; that the European spirit and institutions once admitted can never be rooted out again; and that the scepticism prevalent amongst

the higher orders must descend ere very long to the lower; and the cry of the muezzin from the mosque become a mere ceremony?

But as I only stayed eight days in this place, and knew not a syllable of the language, perhaps it is as well to pretermit any disquisitions about the spirit of the people. I can only say that they looked to be very good-natured, handsome, and lazy; that the women's yellow slippers are very ugly; that the kabobs at the shop hard by the Rope Bazaar are very hot and good; and that at the Armenian cookshops they serve you delicious fish, and a stout raisin wine of no small merit. There came in, as we sat and dined there at sunset, a good old Turk, who called for a penny fish, and sat down under a tree very humbly, and ate it with his own bread. We made that jolly old Mussulman happy with a quart of the raisin wine; and his eyes twinkled with every fresh glass, and he wiped his old beard delighted, and talked and chirped a good deal, and, I dare say, told us the whole state of the empire. He was the only Mussulman with whom I attained any degree of intimacy during my stay in Constantinople; and you will see that, for obvious reasons, I cannot divulge the particulars of our conversation.

"You have nothing to say, and you own it," says somebody: "then why write?" That question perhaps (between ourselves) I have put likewise; and yet, my dear sir, there are *some* things worth remembering even in this brief letter: that woman in the brougham is an idea of significance: that comparison of the Seraglio to Vauxhall in the daytime is a true and real one; from both of which your own great soul and ingenious philosophic spirit may draw conclusions, that I myself have modestly forborne to press. You are too clever to require a moral to be tacked to all the fables you read, as is done for children in the spelling-books; else I would tell you that the government of the Ottoman Porte seems to be as rotten, as wrinkled, and as feeble as the old eunuch I saw crawling about it in the sun; that when the lady drove up in a brougham to Sultan Achmet, I felt that the schoolmaster was really abroad; and that the crescent will go out before that luminary, as meekly as the moon does before the sun.

CHAPTER VIII.

Rhodes.

THE sailing of a vessel direct for Jaffa brought a great number of passengers together, and our decks were covered with Christian, Jew, and Heathen. In the cabin we were Poles and Russians, Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, and Greeks; on the deck were squatted several little colonies of people of different race and persuasion. There was a Greek Papa, a noble figure with a flowing and venerable white beard, who had been living on bread-and-water for I don't know how many years, in order to save a little money to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There were several families of Jewish Rabbis, who celebrated their "feast of tabernacles" on board; their chief men performing worship twice or thrice a day, dressed in their pontifical habits, and bound with phylacteries: and there were Turks, who had their own ceremonies and usages, and wisely kept aloof from their neighbours of Israel.

The dirt of these children of captivity exceeds all possibility of description; the profusion of stinks which they raised, the grease of their venerable garments and faces, the horrible messes cooked in the filthy pots, and devoured with the nasty fingers, the squalor of mats, pots, old bedding, and foul carpets of our Hebrew friends, could hardly be painted by Swift in his dirtiest mood, and cannot be, of course, attempted by my timid and genteel pen. What would they say in Baker Street to some sights with which our new friends favoured us? What would your ladyship have said if you had seen the interesting Greek nun combing her hair over the cabin—combing it with the natural fingers, and, averse to slaughter, flinging the delicate little intruders, which she found in the course of her investigation, gently into the great cabin? Our attention was a good deal occupied in watching the strange ways and customs of the various comrades of ours.

The Jews were refugees from Poland, going to lay their bones to rest in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and performing with exceeding rigour the offices of their religion. At morning and evening you were sure to see the chiefs of the families, arrayed in white robes, bowing over their books, at prayer. Once a

week, on the eve before the Sabbath, there was a general washing in Jewry, which sufficed until the ensuing Friday. The men wore long gowns and caps of fur, or else broad-brimmed hats, or, in service time, bound on their heads little iron boxes, with the sacred name engraved on them. Among the lads there were some beautiful faces; and among the women your humble servant discovered one who was a perfect rosebud of beauty when first emerging from her Friday's toilet;

and for a day or two afterwards, until each succeeding day's smut darkened those fresh and delicate cheeks of hers. We had some very rough weather in the course of the passage from Constantinople to Jaffa, and the sea washed over and over our Israelitish friends and their baggages and bundles; but though they were said to be rich, they would not afford to pay for cabin shelter. One father of a family, finding his progeny half drowned in a squall, vowed he *would* pay for a cabin; but

the weather was somewhat finer the next day, and he could not squeeze out his dollars, and the ship's authorities would not admit him except upon payment.

This unwillingness to part with money is not only found amongst the followers of Moses, but in those of Mahomet, and Christians too. When we went to purchase in the bazaars, after offering money for change, the honest fellows would frequently keep back several piastres, and when urged to refund, would give most dismally: and begin doling out penny by penny, and utter pathetic prayers to their customer not to take any more. I bought five or six pounds' worth of Broussa silks for the womankind, in the bazaar at Constantinople, and the rich Armenian who sold them begged for three-halfpence to pay his boat to Galata. There is something naïf and amusing in this exhibition of cheatery—this simple cringing and wheedling, and passion for twopence-halfpenny. It was pleasant to give a millionaire beggar an alms, and laugh in his face and say, "There, Dives, there's a penny for you: be happy, you poor old swindling scoundrel, as far as a penny goes." I used to watch these Jews on shore, and making bargains with one another as soon as they came on board; the battle between vendor and purchaser was an agony—they shrieked, clasped hands, appealed to one another passionately; their handsome noble faces assumed a look of woe—quite an heroic eagerness and sadness about a farthing.

Ambassadors from our Hebrews descended at Rhodes to buy provisions, and it was curious to see their dealings: there was our venerable Rabbi, who, robed in white and silver, and bending over his book at the morning service, looked like a patriarch, and whom I saw chaffering about a fowl with a brother Rhodian Israelite. How they fought over the body of that lean animal! The street swarmed with Jews: goggling eyes looked out from the old carved casements—hooked noses issued from the low antique doors—Jew boys driving donkeys, Hebrew mothers nursing children,—dusky, tawdry, ragged young beauties and most venerable grey-bearded fathers were all gathered round about the affair of the hen! And at the same time that our Rabbi was arranging the price of it, his children were instructed to procure bundles of green branches to decorate the ship during their feast. Think of the centuries during which these wonderful people have remained unchanged;

and how, from the days of Jacob downwards, they have believed and swindled!

The Rhodian Jews, with their genius for filth, have made their quarter of the noble desolate old town the most ruinous and wretched of all. The escutcheons of the proud old knights are still carved over the doors, whence issue these miserable greasy hucksters and pedlars. The Turks respected these emblems of the brave enemies whom they had overcome, and left them

untouched. When the French seized Malta they were by no means so delicate: they effaced armorial bearings with their usual hot-headed eagerness; and a few years after they had torn down the coats-of-arms of the gentry, the heroes of Malta and Egypt were busy devising heraldry for themselves, and were wild to be barons and counts of the Empire.

The chivalrous relics at Rhodes are very superb. I know of no buildings whose stately and picturesque aspect seems to correspond better with one's notions of their proud founders.

The towers and gates are warlike and strong, but beautiful and aristocratic: you see that they must have been high-bred gentlemen who built them. The edifices appear in almost as perfect a condition as when they were in the occupation of the noble Knights of St. John; and they have this advantage over modern fortifications, that they are a thousand times more picturesque. Ancient war condescended to ornament itself, and built fine carved castles and vaulted gates: whereas, to judge from Gibraltar and Malta, nothing can be less romantic than the modern military architecture; which sternly regards the fighting, without in the least heeding the war-paint. Some of the huge artillery with which the place was defended still lies in the bastions; and the touch-holes of the guns are preserved by being covered with rusty old corslets, worn by defenders of the fort three hundred years ago. The Turks, who battered down chivalry, seem to be waiting their turn of destruction now. In walking through Rhodes one is strangely affected by witnessing the signs of this double decay. For instance, in the streets of the knights, you see noble houses, surmounted by noble escutcheons of superb knights, who lived there, and prayed, and quarrelled, and murdered the Turks; and were the most gallant pirates of the inland seas; and made vows of chastity, and robbed and ravished; and, professing humility, would admit none but nobility into their order; and died recommending themselves to sweet St. John, and calmly hoping for heaven in consideration of all the heathen they had slain. When this superb fraternity was obliged to yield to courage as great as theirs, faith as sincere, and to robbers even more dexterous and audacious than the noblest knight who ever sang a canticle to the Virgin, these halls were filled by magnificent Pashas and Agas, who lived here in the intervals of war, and having conquered its best champions, despised Christendom and chivalry pretty much as an Englishman despises a Frenchman. Now the famous house is let to a shabby merchant, who has his little beggarly shop in the bazaar; to a small officer, who ekes out his wretched pension by swindling, and who gets his pay in bad coin. Mahometanism pays in pewter now, in place of silver and gold. The lords of the world have run to seed. The powerless old sword frightens nobody now—the steel is turned to pewter too, somehow, and will no longer shear a Christian head off any shoulders. In the Crusades my wicked sympathies

have always been with the Turks. They seem to me the better Christians of the two: more humane, less brutally presumptuous about their own merits, and more generous in esteeming their neighbours. As far as I can get at the authentic story, Saladin is a pearl of refinement compared to the brutal beef-eating Richard—about whom Sir Walter Scott has led all the world astray.

When shall we have a real account of those times and heroes—no good-humoured pageant, like those of the Scott romances—but a real authentic story to instruct and frighten honest people of the present day, and make them thankful that the grocer governs the world now in place of the baron? Meanwhile a man of tender feelings may be pardoned for twaddling a little over this sad spectacle of the decay of two of the great institutions of the world. Knighthood is gone—amen; it expired with dignity, its face to the foe: and old Mahometanism is lingering about just ready to drop. But it is unseemly to see such a Grand Potentate in such a state of decay: the son of Bajazet Ilderim insolvent; the descendants of the Prophet bullied by Calmucs and English and whipper-snapper Frenchmen; the Fountain of Magnificence done up, and obliged to coin pewter! Think of the poor dear houris in Paradise, how sad they must look as the arrivals of the Faithful become less and less frequent every day. I can fancy the place beginning to wear the fatal Vauxhall look of the Seraglio, and which has pursued me ever since I saw it: the fountains of eternal wine are beginning to run rather dry, and of a questionable liquor; the ready-roasted-meat trees may cry, "Come eat me," every now and then, in a faint voice, without any gravy in it—but the Faithful begin to doubt about the quality of the victuals. Of nights you may see the houris sitting sadly under them, darning their faded muslins: Ali, Omar, and the Imaums are reconciled and have gloomy consultations: and the Chief of the Faithful himself, the awful camel-driver, the supernatural husband of Khadijah, sits alone in a tumbledown kiosk, thinking moodily of the destiny that is impending over him; and of the day when his gardens of bliss shall be as vacant as the bankrupt Olympus.

All the town of Rhodes has this appearance of decay and ruin except a few consuls' houses planted on the sea-side, here

and there, with bright flags flaunting in the sun; fresh paint; English crockery; shining mahogany, &c.,—so many emblems of the new prosperity of *their* trade, while the old inhabitants were going to rack—the fine Church of St. John, converted into a mosque, is a ruined church, with a ruined mosque inside; the fortifications are mouldering away, as much as time will let them. There was considerable bustle and stir about the little port; but it was the bustle of people who looked for the most part to be beggars; and I saw no shop in the bazaar that seemed to have the value of a pedlar's pack.

I took, by way of guide, a young fellow from Berlin, a journeyman shoemaker, who had just been making a tour in Syria, and who professed to speak both Arabic and Turkish quite fluently—which I thought he might have learned when he was a student at college, before he began his profession of shoemaking; but I found he only knew about three words of Turkish, which were produced on every occasion, as I walked under his guidance through the desolate streets of the noble old town. We went out upon the lines of fortification, through an ancient gate and guard-house, where once a chapel probably stood, and of which the roofs were richly carved and gilded. A ragged squad of Turkish soldiers lolled about the gate now; a couple of boys on a donkey; a grinning slave on a mule; a pair of women flapping along in yellow papooshes; a basket-maker sitting under an antique carved portal, and chanting or howling as he plaited his osiers: a peaceful well of water, at which knights' chargers had drunk, and at which the double-boyed donkey was now refreshing himself—would have made a pretty picture for a sentimental artist. As he sits, and endeavours to make a sketch of this plaintive little comedy, a shabby dignitary of the island comes clattering by on a thirty-shilling horse, and two or three of the ragged soldiers leave their pipes to salute him as he passes under the Gothic archway.

The astonishing brightness and clearness of the sky under which the island seemed to bask, struck me as surpassing anything I had seen—not even at Cadiz, or the Piræus, had I seen sands so yellow, or water so magnificently blue. The houses of the people along the shore were but poor tenements, with humble courtyards and gardens; but every fig-tree was gilded and bright, as if it were in an Hesperian orchard; the palms, planted here and there, rose with a sort of halo of light

round about them; the creepers on the walls quite dazzled with the brilliancy of their flowers and leaves; the people lay in the cool shadows, happy and idle, with handsome solemn faces; nobody seemed to be at work; they only talked a very little, as if idleness and silence were a condition of the delightful shining atmosphere in which they lived.

We went down to an old mosque by the sea-shore, with a cluster of ancient domes hard by it, blazing in the sunshine, and carved all over with names of Allah, and titles of old pirates and generals who reposed there. The guardian of the mosque sat in the garden-court, upon a high wooden pulpit, lazily wagging his body to and fro, and singing the praises of the Prophet gently through his nose, as the breeze stirred through the trees overhead, and cast chequered and changing shadows over the paved court, and the little fountains, and the nasal psalmist on his perch. On one side was the mosque, into which you could see, with its white walls and cool-matted floor, and quaint carved pulpit and ornaments, and nobody at prayers. In the middle distance rose up the noble towers and battlements of the knightly town, with the deep sea-line behind them.

It really seemed as if everybody was to have a sort of sober cheerfulness, and must yield to indolence under this charming atmosphere. I went into the courtyard by the sea-shore (where a few lazy ships were lying, with no one on board), and found it was the prison of the place. The door was as wide open as Westminster Hall. Some prisoners, one or two soldiers and functionaries, and some prisoners' wives, were lolling under an arcade by a fountain; other criminals were strolling about here and there, their chains clinking quite cheerfully; and they and the guards and officials came up chatting quite friendly together, and gazed languidly over the portfolio, as I was endeavouring to get the likeness of one or two of these comfortable malefactors. One old and wrinkled she-criminal, whom I had selected on account of the peculiar hideousness of her countenance, covered it up with a dirty cloth, at which there was a general roar of laughter among this good-humoured auditory of cut-throats, pickpockets, and policemen. The only symptom of a prison about the place was a door, across which a couple of sentinels were stretched, yawning; while within lay three freshly-caught pirates—chained by the leg. They had committed some murders of a very late date, and were awaiting sentence; but their wives

were allowed to communicate freely with them: and it seemed to me that if half-a-dozen friends would set them free, and they themselves had energy enough to move, the sentinels would be a great deal too lazy to walk after them.

The combined influence of Rhodes and Ramazan, I suppose, had taken possession of my friend the Schustergesell from Berlin. As soon as he received his fee, he cut me at once, and went and lay down by a fountain near the port, and ate grapes out of a dirty pocket-handkerchief. Other Christian idlers lay near him, dozing, or sprawling, in the boats, or listlessly munching water-melons. Along the coffee-houses of the quay sat hundreds more, with no better employment; and the captain of the "Iberia" and his officers, and several of the passengers in that famous steamship, were in this company, being idle with all their might. Two or three adventurous young men went off to see the valley where the dragon was killed; but others, more susceptible of the real influence of the island, I am sure would not have moved though we had been told that the Colossus himself was taking a walk half a mile off.

CHAPTER IX.

The White Squall.

On deck, beneath the awning,
I dozing lay and yawning;
It was the grey of dawning,
  Ere yet the sun arose;
And above the funnel's roaring,
And the fitful wind's deploring,
I heard the cabin snoring
  With universal nose.
I could hear the passengers snorting,
I envied their disporting:
Vainly I was courting
  The pleasure of a doze.

So I lay, and wondered why light
Came not, and watched the twilight
And the glimmer of the skylight,
  That shot across the deck;

And the binnacle pale and steady,
And the dull glimpse of the dead-eye,
And the sparks in fiery eddy,
That whirled from the chimney neck;
In our jovial floating prison
There was sleep from fore to mizen,
And never a star had risen
The hazy sky to speck.

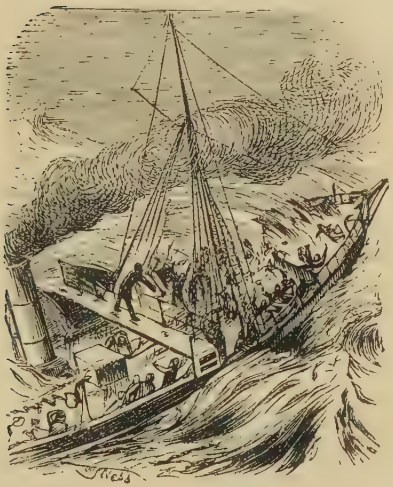
Strange company we harboured;
We'd a hundred Jews to larboard,
Unwashed, uncombed, unbarbered,
Jews black, and brown, and grey;
With terror it would seize ye,
And make your souls uneasy,
To see those Rabbis greasy,
Who did nought but scratch and pray:
Their dirty children pucking,
Their dirty saucepans cooking,
Their dirty fingers hooking
Their swarming fleas away.

To starboard Turks and Greeks were,
Whiskered and brown their cheeks were,
Enormous wide their breeks were,
Their pipes did puff alway;
Each on his mat allotted,
In silence smoked and squatted,
Whilst round their children trotted
In pretty, pleasant play.
He can't but smile who traces
The smiles on those brown faces,
And the pretty prattling graces
Of those small heathens gay.

And so the hours kept tolling,
And through the ocean rolling,
Went the brave "Iberia" bowling
Before the break of day———
When a SQUALL upon a sudden
Came o'er the waters scudding;

And the clouds began to gather,
And the sea was lashed to lather,
And the lowering thunder grumbled,
And the lightning jumped and tumbled,
And the ship, and all the ocean,
Woke up in wild commotion.

Then the wind set up a howling,
And the poodle-dog a yowling,



And the cocks began a crowing,
And the old cow raised a lowing,
As she heard the tempest blowing ;
And fowls and geese did cackle,
And the cordage and the tackle
Began to shriek and crackle ;
And the spray dashed o'er the funnels,
And down the deck in runnels ;

And the rushing water soaks all,
From the seamen in the fo'ksal
To the stokers, whose black faces
Peer out of their bed-places;
And the captain he was bawling,
And the sailors pulling, hauling;
And the quarter-deck tarpauling
Was shivered in the squalling;
And the passengers awaken
Most pitifully shaken;
And the steward jumps up, and hastens
For the necessary basins.

Then the Greeks they groaned and quivered,
And they knelt, and moaned, and shivered,
As the plunging waters met them,
And splashed and overset them;
And they call in their emergence
Upon countless saints and virgins;
And their marrowbones are bended,
And they think the world is ended.

And the Turkish women for'ard
Were frightened and behorror'd;
And, shrieking and bewildering,
The mothers clutched their children,
The men sung, "Allah Illah!
Mashallah Bismillah!"
As the warring waters doused them,
And splashed them and soused them;
And they called upon the Prophet,
And thought but little of it.

Then all the fleas in Jewry
Jumped up and bit like fury;
And the progeny of Jacob
Did on the main-deck wake up
(I wot those greasy Rabbins
Would never pay for cabins);
And each man moaned and jabbered in
His filthy Jewish gaberdine,

In woe and lamentation,
And howling consternation.
And the splashing water drenches
Their dirty brats and wenches;
And they crawl from bales and benches,
In a hundred thousand stenches.

This was the White Squall famous
Which latterly o'ercame us,
And which all will well remember
On the 28th September:
When a Prussian Captain of Lancers
(Those tight-laced, whiskered prancers)
Came on the deck astonished,
By that wild squall admonished,
And wondering cried, "Potztausend!"
Wie ist der Sturm jetzt brausend!"
And looked at Captain Lewis,
Who calmly stood and blew his
Cigar in all the bustle,
And scorned the tempest's tussle.
And oft we've thought thereafter
How he beat the storm to laughter;
For well he knew his vessel
With that vain wind could wrestle;
And when a wreck we thought her
And doomed ourselves to slaughter,
How gaily he fought her,
And through the hubbub brought her,
And, as the tempest caught her,
Cried, "GEORGE! SOME BRANDY-AND-WATER!"

And when, its force expended,
The harmless storm was ended,
And, as the sunrise splendid
Came blushing o'er the sea;
I thought, as day was breaking,
My little girls were waking,
And smiling, and making
A prayer at home for me.

CHAPTER X.

Telmessus—Beyrout.

THERE should have been a poet in our company to describe that charming little bay of Glaucus, into which we entered on the 26th of September, in the first steamboat that ever disturbed its beautiful waters. You can't put down in prose that delicious episode of natural poetry; it ought to be done in a symphony, full of sweet melodies and swelling harmonies; or sung in a strain of clear crystal iambics, such as Milnes knows how to write. A mere map, drawn in words, gives the mind no notion of that exquisite nature. What do mountains become in type, or rivers in Mr. Vizetelly's best brevier? Here lies the sweet bay, gleaming peaceful in the rosy sunshine: green islands dip here and there in its waters: purple mountains swell circling round it; and towards them, rising from the bay, stretches a rich green plain, fruitful with herbs and various foliage, in the midst of which the white houses twinkle. I can see a little minaret, and some spreading palm-trees; but, beyond these, the description would answer as well for Bantry Bay as for Makri. You could write so far, nay, much more particularly and grandly, without seeing the place at all, and after reading Beaufort's "Caramania," which gives you not the least notion of it.

Suppose the great Hydrographer of the Admiralty himself can't describe it, who surveyed the place; suppose Mr. Fellowes, who discovered it afterwards—suppose, I say, Sir John Fellowes, Knt., can't do it (and I defy any man of imagination to get an impression of Telmessus from his book)—can you, vain man, hope to try? The effect of the artist, as I take it, ought to be, to produce upon his hearer's mind, by his art, an effect something similar to that produced on his own by the sight of the natural object. Only music, or the best poetry, can do this. Keats's "Ode to the Grecian Urn" is the best description I know of that sweet old silent ruin of Telmessus. After you have once seen it, the remembrance remains with you, like a tune from Mozart, which he seems to have caught out of heaven, and which rings sweet harmony in your ears for ever after! It's a benefit for all after life! You have but to shut your eyes, and think, and recall it, and the delightful vision comes smiling back,

to your order !—the divine air—the delicious little pageant, which nature set before you on this lucky day.

Here is the entry made in the note-book on the eventful day :—"In the morning steamed into the bay of Glaucus—landed at Makri—cheerful old desolate village—theatre by the beautiful sea-shore—great fertility, oleanders—a palm-tree in the midst of the village, spreading out like a Sultan's aigrette—sculptured caverns, or tombs, up the mountain—camels over the bridge."

Perhaps it is best for a man of fancy to make his own landscape out of these materials : to group the couched camels under the plane-trees ; the little crowd of wandering ragged heathens come down to the calm water, to behold the nearing steamer ; to fancy a mountain, in the sides of which some scores of tombs are rudely carved ; pillars and porticos, and Doric entablatures. But it is of the little theatre that he must make the most beautiful picture—a charming little place of festival, lying out on the shore, and looking over the sweet bay and the swelling purple

islands. No theatre-goer ever looked out on a fairer scene. It encourages poetry, idleness, delicious sensual reverie. O Jones! friend of my heart! would you not like to be a white-robed Greek, lolling languidly, on the cool benches here, and pouring compliments (in the Ionic dialect) into the rosy ears of Neæra? Instead of Jones, your name should be Ionides; instead of a silk hat, you should wear a chaplet of roses in your hair: you would not listen to the choruses they were singing on the stage, for the voice of the fair one would be whispering a rendezvous for the *mesonuktiais horais*, and my Ionides would have no ear for aught beside. Yonder, in the mountain, they would carve a Doric cave temple, to receive your urn when all was done; and you would be accompanied thither by a dirge of the surviving Ionidæ. The caves of the dead are empty now, however, and their place knows them not any more among the festal haunts of the living. But, by way of supplying the choric melodies sung here in old time, one of our companions mounted on the scene and spouted,

"My name is Norval."

On the same day we lay to for a while at another ruined theatre, that of Antiphilos. The Oxford men, fresh with recollections of the little-go, bounded away up the hill on which it lies to the ruin, measured the steps of the theatre, and calculated the width of the scene; while others, less active, watched them with telescopes from the ship's sides, as they plunged in and out of the stones and hollows.

Two days after the scene was quite changed. We were out of sight of the classical country, and lay in St. George's Bay, behind a huge mountain, upon which St. George fought the dragon, and rescued the lovely Lady Sabra, the King of Babylon's daughter. The Turkish fleet was lying about us, commanded by that Halil Pasha whose two children the two last Sultans murdered. The crimson flag, with the star and crescent, floated at the stern of his ship. Our diplomatist put on his uniform and cordons, and paid his Excellency a visit. He spoke in rapture, when he returned, of the beauty and order of the ship, and the urbanity of the infidel Admiral. He sent us bottles of ancient Cyprus wine to drink: and the captain of Her Majesty's ship "Trump," alongside which we were lying, confirmed that good opinion of the Capitan Pasha which the

reception of the above present led us to entertain, by relating many instances of his friendliness and hospitalities. Captain G—— said the Turkish ships were as well manned, as well kept, and as well manœuvred, as any vessels in any service; and intimated a desire to command a Turkish seventy-four, and a perfect willingness to fight her against a French ship of the same size. But I heartily trust he will neither embrace the Mahometan opinions, nor be called upon to engage any seventy-four whatever. If he do, let us hope he will have his own men to fight with. If the crew of the "Trump" were all like the crew of the captain's boat, they need fear no two hundred and fifty men out of any country, with any Joinville at their head. We were carried on shore by this boat. For two years, during which the "Trump" had been lying off Beyrout, none of the men but these eight had ever set foot on shore. Mustn't it be a happy life? We were landed at the busy quay of Beyrout, flanked by the castle that the fighting old commodore half battered down.

Along the Beyrout quays civilisation flourishes under the flags of the consuls, which are streaming out over the yellow buildings in the clear air. Hither she brings from England her produce of marine-stores and woollens, her crockeries, her portable soups, and her bitter ale. Hither she has brought politeness, and the last modes from Paris. They were exhibited in the person of a pretty lady, superintending the great French store, and who, seeing a stranger sketching on the quay, sent forward a man with a chair to accommodate that artist, and greeted him with a bow and a smile, such as only can be found in France. Then she fell to talking with a young French officer with a beard, who was greatly smitten with her. They were making love just as they do on the Boulevard. An Arab porter left his bales, and the camel he was unloading, to come and look at the sketch. Two stumpy flat-faced Turkish soldiers, in red caps and white undresses, peered over the paper. A noble little Lebanonian girl, with a deep yellow face, and curly dun-coloured hair, and a blue tattooed chin, and for all clothing a little ragged shift of blue cloth, stood by like a little statue, holding her urn, and stared with wondering brown eyes. How magnificently blue the water was!—how bright the flags and buildings as they shone above it, and the lines of the rigging tossing in the bay! The white crests of the blue waves jumped and sparkled like quicksilver; the shadows were as broad and

cool as the lights were brilliant and rosy; the battered old towers of the commodore looked quite cheerful in the delicious atmosphere; and the mountains beyond were of an amethyst colour. The French officer and the lady went on chattering quite happily about love, the last new bonnet, or the battle of Isly, or the "Juif Errant." How neatly her gown and sleeves

fitted her pretty little person! We had not seen a woman for a month, except honest Mrs. Flanigan, the stewardess, and the ladies of our party, and the tips of the noses of the Constantinople beauties as they passed by leering from their yakmacs, waddling and plapping in their odious yellow papooshes.

And this day is to be marked with a second white stone, for having given the lucky writer of the present, occasion to behold a second beauty. This was a native Syrian damsel, who bore

the sweet name of Mariam. So it was she stood as two of us (I mention the number for fear of scandal) took her picture.

So it was that the good-natured black cook looked behind her young mistress, with a benevolent grin, that only the admirable Leslie could paint.

Mariam was the sister of the young guide whom we hired to show us through the town, and to let us be cheated in the purchase of gilt scarfs and handkerchiefs, which strangers think proper to buy. And before the following authentic drawing could be made, many were the stratagems the wily artists were obliged to employ, to subdue the shyness of the little Mariam. In the first place, she would stand behind the door (from which in the darkness her beautiful black eyes gleamed out like penny tapers); nor could the entreaties of her brother and mamma bring her from that hiding-place. In order to conciliate the latter, we began by making a picture of her too—that is, not of her, who was an enormous old fat woman in yellow, quivering all over with strings of pearls, and necklaces of sequins, and other ornaments, the which descended from her neck, and down her ample stomacher: we did not depict that big old woman, who would have been frightened at an accurate representation of her own enormity; but an ideal being, all grace and beauty, dressed in her costume, and still simpering before me in my sketch-book like a lady in a book of fashions.

This portrait was shown to the old woman, who handed it over to the black cook, who, grinning, carried it to little Mariam —and the result was, that the young creature stepped forward, and submitted; and has come over to Europe as you see.

A very snug and happy family did this of Mariam's appear to be. If you could judge by all the laughter and giggling, by the splendour of the women's attire, by the neatness of the little house, prettily decorated with arabesque paintings, neat mats, and gay carpets, they were a family well to do in the Beyrout world, and lived with as much comfort as any Europeans. They had one book; and, on the wall of the principal apartment, a black picture of the Virgin, whose name is borne by pretty Mariam.

The camels and the soldiers, the bazaars and khans, the fountains and awnings, which chequer, with such delightful variety of light and shade, the alleys and markets of an Oriental town, are to be seen in Beyrout in perfection; and an artist

might here employ himself for months with advantage and pleasure. A new costume was here added to the motley and picturesque assembly of dresses. This was the dress of the blue-veiled women from the Lebanon, stalking solemnly through the markets, with huge horns, near a yard high, on their foreheads. For thousands of years, since the time the Hebrew prophets wrote, these horns have so been exalted in the Lebanon.

At night Captain Lewis gave a splendid ball and supper to the "Trump." We had the "Trump's" band to perform the music; and a grand sight it was to see the captain himself enthusiastically leading on the drum. Blue lights and rockets were burned from the yards of our ship; which festive signals were answered presently from the "Trump," and from another English vessel in the harbour.

They must have struck the Capitan Pasha with wonder, for he sent his secretary on board of us to inquire what the fireworks meant. And the worthy Turk had scarcely put his foot on the deck, when he found himself seized round the waist by one of the "Trump's" officers, and whirling round the deck in a waltz, to his own amazement, and the huge delight of the company. His face of wonder and gravity, as he went on twirling, could not have been exceeded by that of a dancing dervish at Scutari; and the manner in which he managed to *enjamber* the waltz excited universal applause.

I forgot whether he accommodated himself to European ways so much further as to drink champagne at supper-time; to say that he did would be telling tales out of school, and might interfere with the future advancement of that jolly dancing Turk.

We made acquaintance with another of the Sultan's subjects, who, I fear, will have occasion to doubt of the honour of the English nation, after the foul treachery with which he was treated.

Among the occupiers of the little bazaar watchboxes, vendors of embroidered handkerchiefs and other articles of showy Eastern haberdashery, was a good-looking neat young fellow, who spoke English very fluently, and was particularly attentive to all the passengers on board our ship. This gentleman was not only a pocket-handkerchief merchant in the bazaar, but earned a further livelihood by letting out mules and donkeys; and

he kept a small lodging-house, or inn, for travellers, as we were informed.

No wonder he spoke good English, and was exceedingly polite and well-bred; for the worthy man had passed some time in England, and in the best society too. That humble haberdasher at Beyrout had been a lion here, at the very best houses of the great people, and had actually made his appearance at Windsor, where he was received as a Syrian Prince, and treated with great hospitality by Royalty itself.

I don't know what waggish propensity moved one of the officers of the "Trump" to say that there was an equerry of His Royal Highness the Prince on board, and to point me out as the dignified personage in question. So the Syrian Prince was introduced to the Royal equerry, and a great many compliments passed between us. I even had the audacity to state that on my very last interview with my Royal master, His Royal Highness had said, "Colonel Titmarsh, when you go to Beyrout, you will make special inquiries regarding my interesting friend Cogia Hassan."

Poor Cogia Hassan (I forget whether that was his name, but it is as good as another) was overpowered with this Royal message; and we had an intimate conversation together, at which the waggish officer of the "Trump" assisted with the greatest glee.

But see the consequences of deceit! The next day as we were getting under way, who should come on board but my friend the Syrian Prince, most eager for a last interview with the Windsor equerry; and he begged me to carry his protestations of unalterable fidelity to the gracious consort of Her Majesty. Nor was this all. Cogia Hassan actually produced a great box of sweetmeats, of which he begged my Excellency to accept, and a little figure of a doll dressed in the costume of Lebanon. Then the punishment of imposture began to be

felt severely by me. How to accept the poor devil's sweetmeats? How to refuse them? And as we know that one fib leads to another, so I was obliged to support the first falsehood by another; and putting on a dignified air—"Cogia Hassan," says I, "I am surprised you don't know the habits of the British Court better, and are not aware that our gracious master solemnly forbids his servants to accept any sort of backsheesh upon our travels."

So Prince Cogia Hassan went over the side with his chest of sweetmeats, but insisted on leaving the doll, which may be worth twopence-halfpenny; of which, and of the costume of the women of Lebanon, above is an accurate likeness.

CHAPTER XI.

A Day and Night in Syria.

WHEN, after being for five whole weeks at sea, with a general belief that at the end of a few days the marine malady leaves you for good, you find that a brisk wind and a heavy rolling swell create exactly the same inward effects which they occasioned at the very commencement of the voyage—you begin to fancy that you are unfairly dealt with: and I, for my part, had thought of complaining to the Company of this atrocious violation of the rules of their prospectus; but we were perpetually coming to anchor in various ports, at which intervals of peace and good-humour were restored to us.

On the 3rd of October our cable rushed with a huge rattle into the blue sea before Jaffa, at a distance of considerably more than a mile off the town, which lay before us very clear, with the flags of the consuls flaring in the bright sky and making a cheerful and hospitable show. The houses a great heap of sun-baked stones, surmounted here and there by minarets and countless little whitewashed domes; a few date-trees spread out their fan-like heads over these dull-looking buildings; long sands stretched away on either side, with low purple hills behind them; we could see specks of camels crawling over these yellow plains; and those persons who were about to land had the leisure to behold the sea-spray flashing over the sands, and over a heap of black rocks which lie before the entry to the town. The

swell is very great, the passage between the rocks narrow, and the danger sometimes considerable. So the guide began to entertain the ladies and other passengers in the huge country boat which brought us from the steamer with an agreeable story of a lieutenant and eight seamen of one of Her Majesty's ships, who were upset, dashed to pieces, and drowned upon these rocks, through which two men and two boys, with a very moderate portion of clothing, each standing and pulling half an oar—there

were but two oars between them, and another by way of rudder —were endeavouring to guide us.

When the danger of the rocks and surf was passed, came another danger of the hideous brutes in brown skins and the briefest shirts, who came towards the boat, straddling through the water with outstretched arms, grinning and yelling their Arab invitations to mount their shoulders. I think these fellows frightened the ladies still more than the rocks and the surf; but the poor creatures were obliged to submit; and, trembling, were

accommodated somehow upon the mahogany backs of these ruffians, carried through the shallows, and flung up to a ledge before the city gate, where crowds more of dark people were swarming, howling after their fashion. The gentlemen, meanwhile, were having arguments about the eternal backsheesh with the roaring Arab boatmen; and I recall with wonder and delight especially, the curses and screams of one small and extremely loud-lunged fellow, who expressed discontent at receiving a five, instead of a six-piastre piece. But how is one to know, without possessing the language? Both coins are made of a greasy pewtery sort of tin; and I thought the biggest was the most valuable: but the fellow showed a sense of their value, and a disposition seemingly to cut any man's throat who did not understand it. Men's throats have been cut for a less difference before now.

Being cast upon the ledge, the first care of our gallantry was to look after the ladies, who were scared and astonished by the naked savage brutes, who were shouldering the poor things to and fro; and bearing them through these and a dark archway, we came into a street crammed with donkeys and their packs and drivers, and towering camels with leering eyes looking into the second-floor rooms, and huge splay feet, through which *mesdames et mesdemoiselles* were to be conducted. We made a rush at the first open door, and passed comfortably under the heels of some horses gathered under the arched court, and up a stone staircase, which turned out to be that of the Russian consul's house. His people welcomed us most cordially to his abode, and the ladies and the luggage (objects of our solicitude) were led up many stairs and across several terraces to a most comfortable little room, under a dome of its own, where the representative of Russia sat. Women with brown faces and draggle-tailed coats and turbans, and wondering eyes, and no stays, and blue beads and gold coins hanging round their necks, came to gaze, as they passed, upon the fair neat Englishwomen. Blowsy black cooks puffing over fires and the strangest pots and pans on the terraces, children paddling about in long striped robes, interrupted their sports or labours to come and stare; and the consul, in his cool domed chamber, with a lattice overlooking the sea, with clean mats, and pictures of the Emperor, the Virgin, and St. George, received the strangers with smiling courtesies, regaling the ladies with pomegranates and sugar, the

gentlemen with pipes of tobacco, whereof the fragrant tubes were three yards long.

The Russian amenities concluded, we left the ladies still under the comfortable cool dome of the Russian consulate, and went to see our own representative. The streets of the little town are neither agreeable to horse nor foot travellers. Many of the streets are mere flights of rough steps, leading abruptly into private houses: you pass under archways and passages numberless; a steep dirty labyrinth of stone-vaulted stables and sheds occupies the ground-floor of the habitations; and you pass from flat to flat of the terraces; at various irregular corners of which, little chambers, with little private domes, are erected, and the people live seemingly as much upon the terrace as in the room.

We found the English consul in a queer little arched chamber, with a strange old picture of the King's arms to decorate one side of it; and here the consul, a demure old man, dressed in red flowing robes, with a feeble janissary bearing a shabby tin-mounted staff, or mace, to denote his office, received such of our nation as came to him for hospitality. He distributed pipes and coffee to all and every one; he made us a present of his house and all his beds for the night, and went himself to lie quietly on the terrace; and for all this hospitality he declined to receive any reward from us, and said he was but doing his duty in taking us in. This worthy man, I thought, must doubtless be very well paid by our Government for making such sacrifices; but it appears that he does not get one single farthing, and that the greater number of our Levant consuls are paid at a similar rate of easy renumeration. If we have bad consular agents, have we a right to complain? If the worthy gentlemen cheat occasionally, can we reasonably be angry? But in travelling through these countries, English people, who don't take into consideration the miserable poverty and scanty resources of their country, and are apt to brag and be proud of it, have their vanity hurt by seeing the representatives of every nation but their own well and decently maintained, and feel ashamed at sitting down under the shabby protection of our mean consular flag.

The active young men of our party had been on shore long before us, and seized upon all the available horses in the town; but we relied upon a letter from Halil Pasha, enjoining all governors and pashas to help us in all ways; and hearing we

were the bearers of this document, the cadi and vice-governor of Jaffa came to wait upon the head of our party; declared that it was his delight and honour to set eyes upon us; that he would do everything in the world to serve us; that there were no horses, unluckily, but he would send and get some in three hours; and so left us with a world of grinning bows and many choice compliments from one side to the other, which came to each filtered through an obsequious interpreter. But hours passed, and the clatter of horses' hoofs was not heard. We had our dinner of eggs and flaps of bread, and the sunset gun fired: we had our pipes and coffee again, and the night fell. Is this man throwing dirt upon us? we began to think. Is he laughing at our beards, and are our mothers' graves ill-treated by this smiling swindling cadi? We determined to go and seek in his own den this shuffling dispenser of infidel justice. This time we would be no more bamboozled by compliments; but we would use the language of stern expostulation, and, being roused, would let the rascal hear the roar of the indignant British lion; so we rose up in our wrath. The poor consul got a lamp for us with a bit of wax-candle, such as I wonder his means could afford; the shabby janissary marched ahead with his tin mace; the two laquais-de-place, that two of our company had hired, stepped forward, each with an old sabre, and we went clattering and stumbling down the streets of the town, in order to seize upon this cadi in his own divan. I was glad, for my part (though outwardly majestic and indignant in demeanour), that the horses had not come, and that we had a chance of seeing this little queer glimpse of Oriental life, which the magistrate's faithlessness procured for us.

As piety forbids the Turks to eat during the weary daylight hours of the Ramazan, they spend their time profitably in sleeping until the welcome sunset, when the town wakens: all the lanterns are lighted up; all the pipes begin to puff, and the narghilés to bubble; all the sour-milk-and-sherbet-men begin to yell out the excellence of their wares; all the frying-pans in the little dirty cookshops begin to friz, and the pots to send forth a steam: and through this dingy, ragged, bustling, beggarly, cheerful scene, we began now to march towards the Bow Street of Jaffa. We bustled through a crowded narrow archway which led to the cadi's police-office, entered the little room, atrociously perfumed with musk, and passing by the

rail-board, where the common sort stood, mounted the stage upon which his worship and friends sat, and squatted down on the divans in stern and silent dignity. His honour ordered us coffee, his countenance evidently showing considerable alarm. A black slave, whose duty seemed to be to prepare this beverage in a side-room with a furnace, prepared for each of us about a teaspoonful of the liquor: his worship's clerk, I presume, a tall Turk of a noble aspect, presented it to us; and having lapped up the little modicum of drink, the British lion began to speak.

All the other travellers (said the lion with perfect reason) have good horses and are gone; the Russians have got horses, the Spaniards have horses, the English have horses, but we, we vizirs in our country, coming with letters of Halil Pasha, are laughed at, spit upon! Are Halil Pasha's letters dirt, that you attend to them in this way? Are British lions dogs that you treat them so?—and so on. This speech with many variations was made on our side for a quarter of an hour; and we finally swore that unless the horses were forthcoming we would write to Halil Pasha the next morning, and to His Excellency the English Minister at the Sublime Porte. Then you should have heard the chorus of Turks in reply: a dozen voices rose up from the divan, shouting, screaming, ejaculating, expectorating (the Arabic spoken language seems to require a great employment of the two latter oratorical methods), and uttering what the meek interpreter did not translate to us, but what I dare say were by no means complimentary phrases towards us and our nation. Finally, the palaver concluded by the cadi declaring that by the will of Heaven horses should be forthcoming at three o'clock in the morning; and that if not, why, then, we might write to Halil Pasha.

This posed us, and we rose up and haughtily took leave. I should like to know that fellow's real opinion of us lions very much: and especially to have had the translation of the speeches of a huge-breeched turbaned roaring infidel, who looked and spoke as if he would have liked to fling us all into the sea, which was hoarsely murmuring under our windows an accompaniment to the concert within.

We then marched through the bazaars, that were lofty and grim, and pretty full of people. In a desolate broken building, some hundreds of children were playing and singing; in many

corners sat parties over their water-pipes, one of whom every now and then would begin twanging out a most queer chant; others there were playing at casino—a crowd squatted around the squalling gamblers, and talking and looking on with eager interest. In one place of the bazaar we found a hundred people at least listening to a story-teller who delivered his tale with excellent action, voice, and volubility: in another they were playing a sort of thimble-rig with coffee-cups, all intent upon the game, and the player himself very wild lest one of our party, who had discovered where the pea lay, should tell the company. The devotion and energy with which all these pastimes were pursued, struck me as much as anything. These people have been playing thimble-rig and casino; that story-teller has been shouting his tale of Antar for forty years; and they are just as happy with this amusement now as when first they tried it. Is there no ennui in the Eastern countries, and are blue-devils not allowed to go abroad there?

From the bazaars we went to see the house of Mustapha, said to be the best house and the greatest man of Jaffa. But the great man had absconded suddenly, and had fled into Egypt. The Sultan had made a demand upon him for sixteen thousand purses, £80,000—Mustapha retired—the Sultan pounced down upon his house, and his goods, his horses and his mules. His harem was desolate. Mr. Milnes could have written six affecting poems, had he been with us, on the dark loneliness of that violated sanctuary. We passed from hall to hall, terrace to terrace—a few fellows were slumbering on the naked floors, and scarce turned as we went by them. We entered Mustapha's particular divan—there was the raised floor, but no bearded friends squatting away the night of Ramazan; there was the little coffee furnace, but where was the slave and the coffee and the glowing embers of the pipes? Mustapha's favourite passages from the Koran were still painted up on the walls, but nobody was the wiser for them. We walked over a sleeping negro, and opened the windows which looked into his gardens. The horses and donkeys, the camels and mules were picketed there below, but where is the said Mustapha? From the frying-pan of the Porte, has he not fallen into the fire of Mehemet Ali? And which is best, to broil or to fry? If it be but to read the "Arabian Nights" again on getting home, it is good to have made this little voyage and seen these strange places and faces.

Then we went out through the arched lowering gateway of the town into the plain beyond, and that was another famous and brilliant scene of the "Arabian Nights." The heaven shone with a marvellous brilliancy—the plain disappeared far in the haze—the towers and battlements of the town rose black against the sky—old outlandish trees rose up here and there —clumps of camels were couched in the rare herbage—dogs were baying about—groups of men lay sleeping under their haicks round about—round about the tall gates many lights were twinkling—and they brought us water-pipes and sherbet —and we wondered to think that London was only three weeks off.

Then came the night at the consul's. The poor demure old gentleman brought out his mattresses; and the ladies sleeping round on the divans, we lay down quite happy; and I for my part intended to make as delightful dreams as Alnaschar; but —lo, the delicate mosquito sounded his horn: the active flea jumped up, and came to feast on Christian flesh (the Eastern flea bites more bitterly than the most savage bug in Christendom), and the bug—oh, the accursed! Why was he made? What duty has that infamous ruffian to perform in the world, save to make people wretched? Only Bulwer in his most pathetic style could describe the miseries of that night—the moaning, the groaning, the cursing, the tumbling, the blistering, the infamous despair and degradation! I heard all the cocks in Jaffa crow; the children crying, and the mothers hushing them; the donkeys braying fitfully in the moonlight; at last I heard the clatter of hoofs below, and the hailing of men. It was three o'clock, the horses were actually come; nay, there were camels likewise; asses and mules, pack-saddles and drivers, all bustling together under the moonlight in the cheerful street —and the first night in Syria was over.

CHAPTER XII.

From Jaffa to Jerusalem.

It took an hour or more to get our little caravan into marching order, to accommodate all the packs to the horses, the horses to the riders; to see the ladies comfortably placed in their litter, with a sleek and large black mule fore and aft, a groom to each

mule, and a tall and exceedingly good-natured and mahogany-coloured infidel to walk by the side of the carriage, to balance it as it swayed to and fro, and to offer his back as a step to the inmates whenever they were minded to ascend or alight. These three fellows, fasting through the Ramazan, and over as rough a road, for the greater part, as ever shook mortal bones, performed their fourteen hours' walk of near forty miles with the most admirable courage, alacrity, and good-humour. They once or twice drank water on the march, and so far infringed

the rule ; but they refused all bread or edible refreshment offered to them, and tugged on with an energy that the best camel, and I am sure the best Christian, might envy. What a lesson of good-humoured endurance it was to certain Pall Mall Sardanapaluses, who grumble if club sofa-cushions are not soft enough !

If I could write sonnets at leisure, I would like to chronicle in fourteen lines my sensations on finding myself on a high Turkish saddle, with a pair of fire-shovel stirrups and worsted reins, red padded saddle-cloth, and innumerable tags, fringes, glass-beads, ends of rope, to decorate the harness of the horse, the gallant steed on which I was about to gallop into Syrian life. What a figure we cut in the moonlight, and how they would have stared in the Strand ! Ay, or in Leicestershire, where I warrant such a horse and rider are not often visible ! The shovel stirrups are deucedly short ; the clumsy leathers cut the shins of some equestrians abominably ; you sit over your horse as it were on a tower, from which the descent would be very easy, but for the big peak of the saddle. A good way for the inexperienced is to put a stick or umbrella across the saddle peak again, so that it is next to impossible to go over your horse's neck. I found this a vast comfort in going down the hills, and recommend it conscientiously to other dear simple brethren of the city.

Peaceful men, we did not ornament our girdles with pistols, yataghans, &c., such as some pilgrims appeared to bristle all over with ; and as a lesson to such rash people, a story may be told which was narrated to us at Jerusalem, and carries a wholesome moral. The Honourable Hoggin Armer, who was lately travelling in the East, wore about his stomach two brace of pistols, of such exquisite finish and make, that a Sheikh, in the Jericho country, robbed him merely for the sake of the pistols. I don't know whether he has told the story to his friends at home.

Another story about Sheikhs may here be told *à propos*. That celebrated Irish Peer, Lord Oldgent (who was distinguished in the Buckinghamshire Dragoons), having paid a sort of blackmail to the Sheikh of Jericho country, was suddenly set upon by another Sheikh, who claimed to be the real Jerichonian governor ; and these twins quarrelled over the body of Lord Oldgent, as the widows for the innocent baby before Solomon.

There was enough for both—but these digressions are interminable.

The party got under way at near four o'clock; the ladies in the litter, the French *femme-de-chambre* manfully caracoling on a grey horse; the cavaliers, like your humble servant, on their high saddles; the domestics, flunkeys, guides, and grooms, on all sorts of animals,—some fourteen in all. Add to these, two most grave and stately Arabs in white beards, white turbans, white haicks and raiments; sabres curling round their military thighs, and immense long guns at their backs. More venerable warriors I never saw; they went by the side of the litter soberly prancing. When we emerged from the steep clattering streets of the city into the grey plains, lighted by the moon and starlight, these militaries rode onward, leading the way through the huge avenues of strange diabolical-looking prickly pears (plants that look as if they had grown in Tartarus), by which the first mile or two of route from the city is bounded; and as the dawn arose before us, exhibiting first a streak of grey, then of green, then of red in the sky, it was fine to see these martial figures defined against the rising light. The sight of that little cavalcade, and of the nature around it, will always remain with me, I think, as one of the freshest and most delightful sensations I have enjoyed since the day I first saw Calais pier. It was full day when they gave their horses a drink at a large pretty oriental fountain, and then presently we entered the open plain—the famous plain of Sharon—so fruitful in roses once, now hardly cultivated, but always beautiful and noble.

Here presently, in the distance, we saw another cavalcade pricking over the plain. Our two white warriors spread to the right and left, and galloped to reconnoitre. We, too, put our steeds to the canter, and handling our umbrellas as Richard did his lance against Saladin, went undaunted to challenge this caravan. The fact is, we could distinguish that it was formed of the party of our pious friends the Poles, and we hailed them with cheerful shouting, and presently the two caravans joined company, and scoured the plain at the rate of near four miles per hour. The horse-master, a courier of this company, rode three miles for our one. He was a broken-nosed Arab, with pistols, a sabre, a fusee, a yellow Damascus cloth flapping over his head, and his nose ornamented with diachylon. He rode a hog-necked grey Arab, bristling over with harness, and

jumped, and whirled, and reared, and halted, to the admiration of all.

Scarce had the diachylonian Arab finished his evolutions, when lo! yet another cloud of dust was seen, and another party of armed and glittering horsemen appeared. They, too, were led by an Arab, who was followed by two janissaries, with silver maces shining in the sun. 'Twas the party of the new American Consul-General of Syria and Jerusalem, hastening to that city, with the inferior consuls of Ramleh and Jaffa to escort him. He expects to see the Millennium in three years, and has accepted the office of consul at Jerusalem, so as to be on the spot in readiness.

When the diachylon Arab saw the American Arab, he straightway galloped his steed towards him, took his pipe, which he delivered at his adversary in guise of a jereed, and galloped round and round, and in and out, and there and back again, as in a play of war. The American replied in a similar playful ferocity—the two warriors made a little tournament for us there on the plains before Jaffa, in the which diachylon, being a little worsted, challenged his adversary to a race, and fled away on his grey, the American following on his bay. Here poor sticking-plaster was again worsted, the Yankee contemptuously riding round him, and then declining further exercise.

What more could mortal man want? A troop of knights and paladins could have done no more. In no page of Walter Scott have I read a scene more fair and sparkling. The sober warriors of our escort did not join in the gambols of the young men. There they rode soberly, in their white turbans, by their ladies' litter, their long guns rising up behind them.

There was no lack of company along the road: donkeys numberless, camels by twos and threes; now a mule-driver, trudging along the road, chanting a most queer melody; now a lady, in white veil, black mask, and yellow papooshes, bestriding her ass, and followed by her husband,—met us on the way; and most people gave a salutation. Presently we saw Ramleh, in a smoking mist, on the plain before us, flanked to the right by a tall lonely tower, that might have held the bells of some *moutier* of Caen or Evreux. As we entered, about three hours and a half after starting, among the white domes and stone houses of the little town, we passed the place of tombs. Two women were sitting on one of them,—the one bending her head

towards the stone, and rocking to and fro, and moaning out a very sweet pitiful lamentation. The American consul invited us to breakfast at the house of his subaltern, the hospitable one-eyed Armenian, who represents the United States at Jaffa. The stars and stripes were flaunting over his terraces, to which we ascended, leaving our horses to the care of a multitude of roaring ragged Arabs beneath, who took charge of and fed the animals, though I can't say in the least why; but, in the same way as getting off my horse on entering Jerusalem, I gave the rein into the hand of the first person near me, and have never heard of the worthy brute since. At the American consul's we were served first with rice soup in pishpash, flavoured with cinnamon and spice; then with boiled mutton, then with stewed ditto and tomatoes; then with fowls swimming in grease; then with brown ragoûts belaboured with onions; then with a smoking pilaff of rice: several of which dishes I can pronounce to be of excellent material and flavour. When the gentry had concluded this repast, it was handed to a side table, where the commonalty speedily discussed it. We left them licking their fingers as we hastened away upon the second part of the ride.

And as we quitted Ramleh, the scenery lost that sweet and peaceful look which characterises the pretty plain we had traversed; and the sun, too, rising in the heaven, dissipated all those fresh beautiful tints in which God's world is clothed of early morning, and which city people have so seldom the chance of beholding. The plain over which we rode looked yellow and gloomy; the cultivation little or none; the land across the road-side fringed, for the most part, with straggling wild-carrot plants; a patch of green only here and there. We passed several herds of lean, small, well-conditioned cattle: many flocks of black goats, tended now and then by a ragged negro shepherd, his long gun slung over his back, his hand over his eyes to shade them as he stared at our little cavalcade. Most of the half-naked country-folks we met had this dismal appendage to Eastern rustic life; and the weapon could hardly be one of mere defence, for, beyond the faded scull-cap, or tattered coat of blue or dirty white, the brawny, brown-chested, solemn-looking fellows had nothing seemingly to guard. As before, there was no lack of travellers on the road: more donkeys trotted by, looking sleek and strong; camels singly and by pairs, laden with a little humble ragged merchandise, on their way between

the two towns. About noon we halted eagerly at a short distance from an Arab village and well, where all were glad of a drink of fresh water. A village of beavers, or a colony of ants, make habitations not unlike these dismal huts piled together on the plain here. There were no single huts along the whole line of road; poor and wretched as they are, the Fellahs huddle all together for protection from the other thieves their neighbours. The government (which we restored to them) has no power to protect them, and is only strong enough to rob them. The women, with their long blue gowns and ragged veils, came to and fro with pitchers on their heads. Rebecca had such an one when she brought drink to the lieutenant of Abraham. The boys came staring round, bawling after us with their fathers for the inevitable backsheesh. The village dogs barked round the flocks, as they were driven to water or pasture.

We saw a gloomy, not very lofty-looking ridge of hills in front of us; the highest of which the guide pointing out to us, told us that from it we should see Jerusalem. It looked very near, and we all set up a trot of enthusiasm to get into this hill country.

But that burst of enthusiasm (it may have carried us nearly a quarter of a mile in three minutes) was soon destined to be checked by the disagreeable nature of the country we had to traverse. Before we got to the real mountain district, we were in a manner prepared for it, by the mounting and descent of several lonely outlying hills, up and down which our rough stony track wound. Then we entered the hill district, and our path lay through the clattering bed of an ancient stream, whose brawling waters have rolled away into the past, along with the fierce and turbulent race who once inhabited these savage hills. There may have been cultivation here two thousand years ago. The mountains, or huge stony mounds environing this rough path, have level ridges all the way up to their summits; on these parallel ledges there is still some verdure and soil; when water flowed here, and the country was thronged with that extraordinary population, which, according to the Sacred Histories, was crowded into the region, these mountain steps may have been gardens and vineyards, such as we see now thriving along the hills of the Rhine. Now the district is quite deserted, and you ride among what seem to be so many petrified waterfalls. We saw no animals moving among the stony breaks; scarcely even a dozen little birds in the whole course of the ride.

The sparrows are all at Jerusalem, among the housetops, where their ceaseless chirping and twittering forms the most cheerful sound of the place.

The company of Poles, the company of Oxford men, and the little American army, travelled too quick for our caravan, which was made to follow the slow progress of the ladies' litter, and we had to make the journey through the mountains in a very small number. Not one of our party had a single weapon more dreadful than an umbrella; and a couple of Arabs, wickedly inclined, might have brought us all to the halt, and rifled every carpet-bag and pocket belonging to us. Nor can I say that we journeyed without certain qualms of fear. When swarthy fellows, with girdles full of pistols and yataghans, passed us without unslinging their long guns—when scowling camel-riders, with awful long bending lances, decorated with tufts of rags, or savage plumes of scarlet feathers, went by without molestation—I think we were rather glad that they did not stop and parley: for, after all, a British lion with an umbrella is no match for an Arab with his infernal long gun. What, too, would have become of our women? So we tried to think that it was entirely out of anxiety for them that we were inclined to push on.

There is a shady resting-place and village in the midst of the mountain district where the travellers are accustomed to halt for an hour's repose and refreshment; and the other caravans were just quitting this spot, having enjoyed its cool shades and waters, when we came up. Should we stop? Regard for the ladies (of course no other earthly consideration) made us say, "No!" What admirable self-denial and chivalrous devotion! So our poor devils of mules and horses got no rest and no water, our panting litter-men no breathing time, and we staggered desperately after the procession ahead of us. It wound up the mountain in front of us: the Poles with their guns and attendants, the American with his janissaries; fifty or sixty all riding slowly like the procession in "Bluebeard."

But alas, they headed us very soon; when we got up the weary hill they were all out of sight. Perhaps thoughts of Fleet Street did cross the minds of some of us then, and a vague desire to see a few policemen. The district now seemed peopled, and with an ugly race. Savage personages peered at us out of huts, and grim holes in the rocks. The mules began to loiter most abominably—water the muleteers must have—

and, behold, we came to a pleasant-looking village of trees standing on a hill ; children were shaking figs from the trees—women were going about—before us was the mosque of a holy man—the village, looking like a collection of little forts, rose up on the hill to our right, with a long view of the fields and gardens stretching from it, and camels arriving with their burdens. Here we must stop ; Paolo, the chief servant, knew the Sheikh of the village—he very good man—give him water and supper—water very good here—in fact we began to think of the propriety of halting here for the night, and making our entry into Jerusalem on the next day.

A man on a handsome horse dressed in red came prancing up to us, looking hard at the ladies in the litter, and passed away. Then two others sauntered up, one handsome, and dressed in red too, and he stared into the litter without ceremony, began to play with a little dog that lay there, asked if we were Inglees, and was answered by me in the affirmative. Paolo had brought the water, the most delicious draught in the world. The gentlefolks had had some, the poor muleteers were longing for it. The French maid, the courageous Victoire (never since the days of Joan of Arc has there surely been a more gallant and virtuous female of France) refused the drink ; when suddenly a servant of the party scampers up to his master and says : "Abou Gosh says the ladies must get out and show themselves to the women of the village !"

It was Abou Gosh himself, the redoubted robber Sheikh about whom we had been laughing and crying "Wolf !" all day. Never was seen such a skurry ! "March !" was the instant order given. When Victoire heard who it was and the message, you should have seen how she changed countenance ; trembling for her virtue in the ferocious clutches of a Gosh. "Un verre d'eau pour l'amour de Dieu !" gasped she, and was ready to faint on her saddle. "Ne buvez plus, Victoire !" screamed a little fellow of our party. "Push on, push on !" cried one and all. "What's the matter ?" exclaimed the ladies in the litter, as they saw themselves suddenly jogging on again. But we took care not to tell them what had been the designs of the redoubtable Abou Gosh. Away then we went—Victoire was saved—and her mistresses rescued from dangers they knew not of, until they were a long way out of the village.

Did he intend insult or good-will? Did Victoire escape

the odious chance of becoming Madame Abou Gosh? Or did the mountain chief simply propose to be hospitable after his fashion? I think the latter was his desire; if the former had been his wish, a half-dozen of his long guns could have been up with us in a minute, and had all our party at their mercy. But now, for the sake of the mere excitement, the incident was, I am sorry to say, rather a pleasant one than otherwise; especially for a traveller who is in the happy condition of being able to sing before robbers, as is the case with the writer of the present.

A little way out of the land of Goshen we came upon a long stretch of gardens and vineyards, slanting towards the setting sun, which illuminated numberless golden clusters of the most delicious grapes, of which we stopped and partook. Such grapes were never before tasted; water so fresh as that which a countryman fetched for us from a well never sluiced parched throats before. It was the ride, the sun, and above all Abou Gosh, who made that refreshment so sweet, and hereby I offer him my best thanks. Presently, in the midst of a most diabolical ravine, down which our horses went sliding, we heard the evening gun: it was fired from Jerusalem. The twilight is brief in this country, and in a few minutes the landscape was grey round about us, and the sky lighted up by a hundred thousand stars, which made the night beautiful.

Under this superb canopy we rode for a couple of hours to our journey's end. The mountains round about us dark, lonely, and sad; the landscape as we saw it at night, (it is not more cheerful in the daytime,) the most solemn and forlorn I have ever seen. The feelings of almost terror with which, riding through the night, we approached this awful place, the centre of the world's past and future history, have no need to be noted down here. The recollection of those sensations must remain with a man as long as his memory lasts; and he should think of them as often, perhaps, as he should talk of them little.

CHAPTER XIII.

Jerusalem.

THE ladies of our party found excellent quarters in readiness for them at the Greek convent in the city; where airy rooms, and plentiful meals, and wines and sweetmeats delicate and abundant, were provided to cheer them after the fatigues of their journey. I don't know whether the worthy fathers of the convent share in the good things which they lavish on their guests; but they look as if they do. Those whom we saw bore every sign of easy conscience and good living; there were a pair of strong, rosy, greasy, lazy lay-brothers, dawdling in the sun on the convent terrace, or peering over the parapet into the street below, whose looks gave one a notion of anything but asceticism.

In the principal room of the strangers' house (the lay traveller is not admitted to dwell in the sacred interior of the convent,) and over the building, the Russian double-headed eagle is displayed. The place is under the patronage of the Emperor Nicholas; an Imperial Prince has stayed in these rooms; the Russian consul performs a great part in the city; and a considerable annual stipend is given by the Emperor towards the maintenance of the great establishment in Jerusalem. The Great Chapel of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is by far the richest, in point of furniture, of all the places of worship under that roof. We were in Russia, when we came to visit our friends here; under the protection of the Father of the Church and the Imperial Eagle! This butcher and tyrant, who sits on his throne only through the crime of those who held it before him—every step in whose pedigree is stained by some horrible mark of murder, parricide, adultery—this padded and whiskered pontiff—who rules in his jack-boots over a system of spies and soldiers, of deceit, ignorance, dissoluteness, and brute force, such as surely the history of the world never told of before—has a tender interest in the welfare of his spiritual children: in the Eastern Church ranks after Divinity, and is worshipped by millions of men. A pious exemplar of Christianity truly! and of the condition to which its union with politics has brought it! Think of the rank to which he pretends, and gravely believes that he possesses, no doubt!—think of those who assumed the same

ultra-sacred character before him!—and then of the Bible and the Founder of the Religion, of which the Emperor assumes to be the chief priest and defender!

We had some Poles of our party; but these poor fellows went to the Latin convent, declining to worship after the Emperor's fashion. The next night after our arrival, two of them passed in the Sepulchre. There we saw them, more than once on subsequent visits, kneeling in the Latin Church before the pictures, or marching solemnly with candles in processions, or lying flat on the stones, or passionately kissing the spots which their traditions have consecrated as the authentic places of the Saviour's sufferings. More honest or more civilised, or from opposition, the Latin fathers have long given up and disowned the disgusting mummery of the Eastern Fire—which lie the Greeks continue annually to tell.

Their travellers' house and convent, though large and commodious, are of a much poorer and shabbier condition than those of the Greeks. Both make-believe not to take money; but the traveller is expected to pay in each. The Latin fathers enlarge their means by a little harmless trade in beads and crosses, and mother-of-pearl shells, on which figures of saints are engraved; and which they purchase from the manufacturers, and vend at a small profit. The English, until of late, used to be quartered in these sham inns; but last year two or three Maltese took houses for the reception of tourists, who can now be accommodated with cleanly and comfortable board, at a rate not too heavy for most pockets.

To one of these we went very gladly; giving our horses the bridle at the door, which went off of their own will to their stables, through the dark inextricable labyrinths of streets, archways and alleys, which we had threaded after leaving the main street from the Jaffa Gate. There, there was still some life. Numbers of persons were collected at their doors, or smoking before the dingy coffee-houses, where singing and story-telling were going on; but out of this great street everything was silent, and no sign of a light from the windows of the low houses which we passed.

We ascended from a lower floor up to a terrace, on which were several little domed chambers, or pavilions. From this terrace, whence we looked in the morning, a great part of the

city spread before us :—white domes upon domes, and terraces of the same character as our own. Here and there, from among these whitewashed mounds round about, a minaret rose, or a rare date-tree; but the chief part of the vegetation near was that odious tree the prickly pear,—one huge green wart growing out of another, armed with spikes, as inhospitable as the aloe, without shelter or beauty. To the right the Mosque of Omar rose; the rising sun behind it. Yonder steep tortuous lane

before us, flanked by ruined walls on either side, has borne, time out of mind, the title of Via Dolorosa; and tradition has fixed the spots where the Saviour rested, bearing his cross to Calvary. But of the mountain, rising immediately in front of us, a few grey olive-trees speckling the yellow side here and there, there can be no question. That is the Mount of Olives. Bethany lies beyond it. The most sacred eyes that ever looked on this world have gazed on those ridges: it was there He used to walk and teach. With shame and humility one looks towards

the spot where that inexpressible Love and Benevolence lived and breathed; where the great yearning heart of the Saviour interceded for all our race; and whence the bigots and traitors of his day led Him away to kill Him!

That company of Jews whom we had brought with us from Constantinople, and who had cursed every delay on the route, not from impatience to view the Holy City, but from rage at being obliged to purchase dear provisions for their maintenance on ship-board, made what bargains they best could at Jaffa, and journeyed to the Valley of Jehoshaphat at the cheapest rate. We saw the tall form of the old Polish Patriarch, venerable in filth, stalking among the stinking ruins of the Jewish quarter. The sly old Rabbi, in the greasy folding hat, who would not pay to shelter his children from the storm off Beyrout, greeted us in the bazaars; the younger Rabbis were furbished up with some smartness. We met them on Sunday at the kind of promenade by the walls of the Bethlehem Gate; they were in company of some red-bearded co-religionists, smartly attired in Eastern raiment; but their voice was the voice of the Jews of Berlin, and of course as we passed they were talking about so many hundert thaler. You may track one of the people, and be sure to hear mention of that silver calf that they worship.

The English mission has been very unsuccessful with these religionists. I don't believe the Episcopal apparatus—the chaplains, and the colleges, and the beadles—have succeeded in converting a dozen of them; and a sort of martyrdom is in store for the luckless Hebrews at Jerusalem who shall secede from their faith. Their old community spurn them with horror; and I heard of the case of one unfortunate man, whose wife, in spite of her husband's change of creed, being resolved, like a true woman, to cleave to him, was spirited away from him in his absence; was kept in privacy in the city, in spite of all exertions of the mission, of the consul and the bishop, and the chaplains and the beadles; was passed away from Jerusalem to Beyrout, and thence to Constantinople; and from Constantinople was whisked off into the Russian territories, where she still pines after her husband. May that unhappy convert find consolation away from her. I could not help thinking, as my informant, an excellent and accomplished gentleman of the mission, told me the story, that the Jews had done only what the Christians do

under the same circumstances. The woman was the daughter of a most learned Rabbi, as I gathered. Suppose the daughter of the Rabbi of Exeter, or Canterbury, were to marry a man who turned Jew, would not her Right Reverend Father be justified in taking her out of the power of a person likely to hurl her soul to perdition? These poor converts should surely be sent away to England out of the way of persecution. We could not but feel a pity for them, as they sat there on their benches in the church conspicuous; and thought of the scorn and contumely which attended them without, as they passed, in their European dresses and shaven beards, among their grisly, scowling, long-robed countrymen.

As elsewhere in the towns I have seen, the Ghetto of Jerusalem is pre-eminent in filth. The people are gathered round about the dung-gate of the city. Of a Friday you may hear their wailings and lamentations for the lost glories of their city. I think the Valley of Jehoshaphat is the most ghastly sight I have seen in the world. From all quarters they come hither to bury their dead. When his time is come yonder hoary old miser, with whom we made our voyage, will lay his carcase to rest here. To do that, and to claw together money, has been the purpose of that strange long life.

We brought with us one of the gentlemen of the mission, a Hebrew convert, the Rev. Mr. E——; and lest I should be supposed to speak with disrespect above of any of the converts of the Hebrew faith, let me mention this gentleman as the only one whom I had the fortune to meet on terms of intimacy. I never saw a man whose outward conduct was more touching, whose sincerity was more evident, and whose religious feeling seemed more deep, real, and reasonable.

Only a few feet off, the walls of the Anglican Church of Jerusalem rise up from their foundations on a picturesque open spot, in front of the Bethlehem Gate. The English Bishop has his church hard by: and near it is the house where the Christians of our denomination assemble and worship.

There seem to be polyglot services here. I saw books of prayer, or Scripture, in Hebrew, Greek, and German: in which latter language Dr. Alexander preaches every Sunday. A gentleman who sat near me at church used all these books indifferently; reading the first lesson from the Hebrew book, and the second from the Greek. Here we all assembled on the Sunday

after our arrival : it was affecting to hear the music and language of our country sounding in this distant place ; to have the decent and manly ceremonial of our service ; the prayers delivered in that noble language. Even that stout anti-prelatist, the American consul, who has left his house and fortune in America in order to witness the coming of the Millennium, who believes it to be so near that he has brought a dove with him from his native land (which bird he solemnly informed us was to survive the expected Advent), was affected by the good old words and service. He swayed about and moaned in his place at various passages ; during the sermon he gave especial marks of sympathy and approbation. I never heard the service more excellently and impressively read than by the Bishop's chaplain, Mr. Veitch. But it was the music that was most touching I thought,—the sweet old songs of home.

There was a considerable company assembled ; near a hundred people I should think. Our party made a large addition to the usual congregation. The Bishop's family is proverbially numerous : the consul, and the gentlemen of the mission, have wives, and children, and English establishments. These, and the strangers, occupied places down the room, to the right and left of the desk and communion-table. The converts, and the members of the college, in rather a scanty number, faced the officiating clergyman ; before whom the silver maces of the janissaries were set up, as they set up the beadles' maces in England.

I made many walks round the city to Olivet and Bethany, to the tombs of the kings, and the fountains sacred in story. These are green and fresh, but all the rest of the landscape seemed to me to be *frightful*. Parched mountains, with a grey bleak olive-tree trembling here and there ; savage ravines and valleys, paved with tombstones—a landscape unspeakably ghastly and desolate, meet the eye wherever you wander round about the city. The place seems quite adapted to the events which are recorded in the Hebrew histories. It and they, as it seems to me, can never be regarded without terror. Fear and blood, crime and punishment, follow from page to page in frightful succession. There is not a spot at which you look, but some violent deed has been done there : some massacre has been committed, some victim has been murdered, some idol has been worshipped with bloody and dreadful rites. Not far from hence

is the place where the Jewish conqueror fought for the possession of Jerusalem. "The sun stood still, and hasted not to go down about a whole day;" so that the Jews might have daylight to destroy the Amorites, whose iniquities were full, and whose land they were about to occupy. The fugitive heathen king, and his allies, were discovered in their hiding-place, and hanged: "and the children of Judah smote Jerusalem with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire; and they left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed."

I went out at the Zion Gate, and looked at the so-called tomb of David. I had been reading all the morning in the Psalms, and his history in Samuel and Kings. "*Bring thou down Shimei's hoar head to the grave with blood,*" are the last words of the dying monarch as recorded by the history. What they call the tomb is now a crumbling old mosque; from which Jew and Christian are excluded alike. As I saw it, blazing in the sunshine, with the purple sky behind it, the glare only served to mark the surrounding desolation more clearly. The lonely walls and towers of the city rose hard by. Dreary mountains, and declivities of naked stones, were round about: they are burrowed with holes in which Christian hermits lived and died. You see one green place far down in the valley: it is called En Rogel. Adonijah feasted there, who was killed by his brother Solomon, for asking for Abishag, for wife. The Valley of Hinnom skirts the hill: the dismal ravine was a fruitful garden once. Ahaz, and the idolatrous kings, sacrificed to idols under the green trees there, and "caused their children to pass through the fire." On the mountain opposite, Solomon, with the thousand women of his harem, worshipped the gods of all their nations, "Ashtoreth," and "Milcom, and Molech, the abomination of the Ammonites." An enormous charnel-house stands on the hill where the bodies of dead pilgrims used to be thrown; and common belief has fixed upon this spot as the Aceldama, which Judas purchased with the price of his treason. Thus you go on from one gloomy place to another, each seared with its bloody tradition. Yonder is the Temple, and you think of Titus's soldiery storming its flaming porches, and entering the city, in the savage defence of which two million human souls perished. It was on Mount Zion that Godfrey and Tancred had their camp: when the Crusaders entered the mosque, they rode knee-deep in the blood of its defenders, and of the women

and children who had fled thither for refuge: it was the victory of Joshua over again. Then, after three days of butchery, they purified the desecrated mosque and went to prayer. In the centre of this history of crime rises up the Great Murder of all. . . .

I need say no more about this gloomy landscape. After a man has seen it once, he never forgets it—the recollection of it seems to me to follow him like a remorse, as it were to implicate him in the awful deed which was done there. Oh! with what unspeakable shame and terror should one think of that crime, and prostrate himself before the image of that Divine Blessed Sufferer!

Of course the first visit of the traveller is to the famous Church of the Sepulchre.

In the archway, leading from the street to the court and church, there is a little bazaar of Bethlehemites, who must interfere considerably with the commerce of the Latin fathers. These men bawl to you from their stalls, and hold up for your purchase their devotional baubles,—bushels of rosaries and scented beads, and carved mother-of-pearl shells, and rude stone salt-cellars and figures. Now that inns are established, —envoys of these pedlars attend them on the arrival of strangers, squat all day on the terraces before your door, and patiently entreat you to buy of their goods. Some worthies there are who drive a good trade by tattooing pilgrims with the five crosses, the arms of Jerusalem; under which the name of the city is punctured in Hebrew, with the auspicious year of the Hadji's visit. Several of our fellow-travellers submitted to this queer operation, and will carry to their grave this relic of their journey. Some of them had engaged as servant a man at Beyrout, who had served as a lad on board an English ship in the Mediterranean. Above his tattooage of the five crosses the fellow had a picture of two hearts united, and the pathetic motto, "Betsy my dear." He had parted with Betsy my dear five years before at Malta. He had known a little English there, but had forgotten it. Betsy my dear was forgotten too. Only her name remained engraved with a vain simulacrum of constancy on the faithless rogue's skin: on which was now printed another token of equally effectual devotion. The beads and the tattooing, however, seem essential ceremonies attendant

on the Christian pilgrim's visit; for many hundreds of years, doubtless, the palmers have carried off with them these simple reminiscences of the sacred city. That symbol has been engraven upon the arms of how many Princes, Knights, and Crusaders! Don't you see a moral as applicable to them as to the swindling Beyrout horseboy? I have brought you back that cheap and wholesome apologue, in lieu of any of the Bethlehemite shells and beads.

After passing through the porch of the pedlars, you come to the courtyard in front of the noble old towers of the Church of the Sepulchre, with pointed arches and Gothic traceries, rude, but rich and picturesque in design. Here crowds are waiting in the sun, until it shall please the Turkish guardians of the church-door to open. A swarm of beggars sit here permanently: old tattered hags with long veils, ragged children, blind old bearded beggars, who raise up a chorus of prayers for money, holding

out their wooden bowls or clattering with their sticks on the stones, or pulling your coat skirts and moaning and whining; yonder sit a group of coal-black Coptish pilgrims, with robes and turbans of dark-blue, fumbling their perpetual beads. A party of Arab Christians have come up from their tents or villages: the men half-naked, looking as if they were beggars, or banditti, upon occasion; the women have flung their head-cloths back, and are looking at the strangers under their tattooed eyebrows. As for the strangers, there is no need to describe *them:* that figure of the Englishman, with his hands in his pockets, has been seen all the world over: staring down the crater of Vesuvius, or into a Hottentot Kraal—or at a pyramid, or a Parisian coffee-house, or an Esquimaux hut—with the same insolent calmness of demeanour. When the gates of the church are open, he elbows in among the first, and flings a few scornful piastres to the Turkish doorkeeper; and gazes round easily at the place, in which people of every other nation in the world are in tears, or in rapture, or wonder. He has never seen the place until now, and looks as indifferent as the Turkish guardian who sits in the doorway, and swears at the people as they pour in.

Indeed, I believe it is impossible for us to comprehend the source and nature of the Roman Catholic devotion. I once went into a church at Rome at the request of a Catholic friend, who described the interior to be so beautiful and glorious, that he thought (he said) it must be like heaven itself. I found walls hung with cheap stripes of pink and white calico, altars covered with artificial flowers, a number of wax candles, and plenty of gilt-paper ornaments. The place seemed to me like a shabby theatre; and here was my friend on his knees at my side, plunged in a rapture of wonder and devotion.

I could get no better impression out of this the most famous church in the world. The deceits are too open and flagrant; the inconsistencies and contrivances too monstrous. It is hard even to sympathise with persons who receive them as genuine; and though (as I know and saw in the case of my friend at Rome) the believer's life may be passed in the purest exercise of faith and charity, it is difficult even to give him credit for honesty, so barefaced seem the impostures which he professes to believe and reverence. It costs one no small effort even to admit the possibility of a Catholic's credulity: to share in his

rapture and devotion is still further out of your power; and I could get from this church no other emotions but those of shame and pain.

The legends with which the Greeks and Latins have garnished the spot have no more sacredness for you than the hideous, unreal, barbaric pictures and ornaments which they have lavished on it. Look at the fervour with which pilgrims kiss and weep over a tawdry Gothic painting, scarcely better fashioned than an idol in a South Sea Morai. The histories which they are called upon to reverence are of the same period and order,—savage Gothic caricatures. In either a saint appears in the costume of the middle ages, and is made to accommodate himself to the fashion of the tenth century.

The different Churches battle for the possession of the various relics. The Greeks show you the Tomb of Melchisedec, while the Armenians possess the Chapel of the Penitent Thief; the poor Copts (with their little cabin of a chapel) can yet boast of possessing the thicket in which Abraham caught the Ram, which was to serve as the vicar of Isaac; the Latins point out the Pillar to which the Lord was bound. The place of the Invention of the Sacred Cross, the Fissure in the Rock of Golgotha, the Tomb of Adam himself—are all here within a few yards' space. You mount a few steps, and are told it is Calvary upon which you stand. All this in the midst of flaring candles, reeking incense, savage pictures of Scripture story, or portraits of kings who have been benefactors to the various chapels; a din and clatter of strange people,—these weeping, bowing, kissing,—those utterly indifferent; and the priests clad in outlandish robes, snuffling and chanting incomprehensible litanies, robing, disrobing, lighting up candles or extinguishing them, advancing, retreating, bowing with all sorts of unfamiliar genuflexions. Had it pleased the inventors of the Sepulchre topography to have fixed on fifty more spots of ground as the places of the events of the sacred story, the pilgrim would have believed just as now. The priest's authority has so mastered his faith, that it accommodates itself to any demand upon it; and the English stranger looks on the scene, for the first time, with a feeling of scorn, bewilderment, and shame at that grovelling credulity, those strange rites and ceremonies, that almost confessed imposture.

Jarred and distracted by these, the Church of the Holy

Sepulchre, for some time, seems to an Englishman the least sacred spot about Jerusalem. It is the lies, and the legends, and the priests, and their quarrels, and their ceremonies, which keep the Holy Place out of sight. A man has not leisure to view it, for the brawling of the guardians of the spot. The Roman conquerors, they say, raised up a statue of Venus in this sacred place, intending to destroy all memory of it. I don't think the heathen was as criminal as the Christian is now. To deny and disbelieve, is not so bad as to make belief a ground to cheat upon. The liar Ananias perished for that; and yet out of these gates, where angels may have kept watch—out of the tomb of Christ—Christian priests issue with a lie in their hands. What a place to choose for imposture, good God! to sully with brutal struggles for self-aggrandisement or shameful schemes of gain!

The situation of the Tomb (into which, be it authentic or not, no man can enter without a shock of breathless fear, and deep and awful self-humiliation) must have struck all travellers. It stands in the centre of the arched rotunda, which is common to all denominations, and from which branch off the various chapels belonging to each particular sect. In the Coptic chapel I saw one coal-black Copt, in blue robes, cowering in the little cabin, surrounded by dingy lamps, barbarous pictures, and cheap faded trumpery. In the Latin Church there was no service going on, only two fathers dusting the mouldy gewgaws along the brown walls, and laughing to one another. The gorgeous church of the Fire impostors, hard by, was always more fully attended; as was that of their wealthy neighbours, the Armenians. These three main sects hate each other; their quarrels are interminable; each bribes and intrigues with the heathen lords of the soil, to the prejudice of his neighbour. Now it is the Latins who interfere, and allow the common church to go to ruin, because the Greeks purpose to roof it; now the Greeks demolish a monastery on Mount Olivet, and leave the ground to the Turks, rather than allow the Armenians to possess it. On another occasion, the Greeks having mended the Armenian steps which lead to the (so-called) Cave of the Nativity at Bethlehem, the latter asked for permission to destroy the work of the Greeks, and did so. And so round this sacred spot, the centre of Christendom, the representatives of the three great sects worship under one roof, and hate each other!

Above the Tomb of the Saviour, the cupola *is open*, and you see the blue sky overhead. Which of the builders was it that had the grace to leave that under the high protection of Heaven, and not confine it under the mouldering old domes and roofs, which cover so much selfishness, and uncharitableness, and imposture?

We went to Bethlehem, too: and saw the apocryphal wonders there.

Five miles' ride brings you from Jerusalem to it, over naked wavy hills; the aspect of which, however, grows more cheerful as you approach the famous village. We passed the Convent of Mar Elyas on the road, walled and barred like a fort. In spite of its strength, however, it has more than once been stormed by the Arabs, and the luckless fathers within put to death. Hard by was Rebecca's Well: a dead body was lying there, and crowds of male and female mourners dancing and howling round it. Now and then a little troop of savage scowling horsemen—a shepherd driving his black sheep, his gun over his shoulder—a troop of camels—or of women, with long blue robes and white veils, bearing pitchers, and staring at the strangers with their great solemn eyes—or a company of labourers, with their donkeys, bearing grain or grapes to the city,—met us and enlivened the little ride. It was a busy and cheerful scene. The Church of the Nativity, with the adjoining convents, forms a vast and noble Christian structure. A party of travellers were going to the Jordan that day, and scores of their followers—of the robbing Arabs, who profess to protect them (magnificent figures some of them, with flowing haicks and turbans, with long guns and scimitars, and wretched horses, covered with gaudy trappings), were standing on the broad pavement before the little convent gate. It was such a scene as Cattermole might paint. Knights and Crusaders may have witnessed a similar one. You could fancy them issuing out of the narrow little portal, and so greeted by the swarms of swarthy clamorous women and merchants and children.

The scene within the building was of the same Gothic character. We were entertained by the Superior of the Greek Convent, in a fine refectory, with ceremonies and hospitalities that pilgrims of the middle ages might have witnessed. We were shown over the magnificent Barbaric Church, visited of

course the Grotto where the Blessed Nativity is said to have taken place, and the rest of the idols set up for worship by the clumsy legend. When the visit was concluded, the party going to the Dead Sea filed off with their armed attendants; each individual traveller making as brave a show as he could, and personally accoutred with warlike swords and pistols. The picturesque crowds, and the Arabs and the horsemen, in the sunshine; the noble old convent, and the grey-bearded priests, with their feast; and the church, and its pictures and columns, and incense; the wide brown hills spreading round the village; with the accidents of the road,—flocks and shepherds, wells and funerals, and camel-trains,—have left on my mind a brilliant, romantic, and cheerful picture. But you, dear M——, without visiting the place, have imagined one far finer; and Bethlehem, where the Holy Child was born, and the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill towards men," is the most sacred and beautiful spot in the earth to you.

By far the most comfortable quarters in Jerusalem are those of the Armenians, in their convent of St. James. Wherever we have been, those Eastern quakers look grave, and jolly, and sleek. Their convent at Mount Zion is big enough to contain two or three thousand of their faithful; and their church is ornamented by the most rich and hideous gifts ever devised by uncouth piety. Instead of a bell, the fat monks of the convent beat huge noises on a board, and drub the faithful in to prayers. I never saw men more lazy and rosy than these reverend fathers, kneeling in their comfortable matted church, or sitting in easy devotion. Pictures, images, gilding, tinsel, wax candles, twinkle all over the place; and ten thousand ostrichs' eggs (or any lesser number you may allot) dangle from the vaulted ceiling. There were great numbers of people at worship in this gorgeous church: they went on their knees, kissing the walls with much fervour, and paying reverence to the most precious relic of the convent,—the chair of St. James, their patron, the first Bishop of Jerusalem.

The chair pointed out with greatest pride in the church of the Latin convent, is that shabby red damask one appropriated to the French Consul,—the representative of the King of that nation,—and the protection which it has from time immemo-

rial accorded to the Christians of the Latin rite in Syria. All French writers and travellers speak of this protection with delightful complacency. Consult the French books of travel on the subject, and any Frenchman whom you may meet: he says, "La France, Monsieur, de tous les temps protége les Chrétiens d'Orient;" and the little fellow looks round the church with a sweep of the arm, and protects it accordingly. It is *bon ton* for them to go in processions; and you see them on such errands, marching with long candles, as gravely as may be. But I have never been able to edify myself with their devotion; and the religious outpourings of Lamartine and Chateaubriand, which we have all been reading *à propos* of the journey we are to make, have inspired me with an emotion anything but respectful. "Voyez comme M. de Chateaubriand prie Dieu," the Viscount's eloquence seems always to say. There is a sanctified grimace about the little French pilgrim which it is very difficult to contemplate gravely.

The pictures, images, and ornaments of the principal Latin convent are quite mean and poor, compared to the wealth of the Armenians. The convent is spacious, but squalid. Many hopping and crawling plagues are said to attack the skins of pilgrims who sleep there. It is laid out in courts and galleries, the mouldy doors of which are decorated with twopenny pictures of favourite saints and martyrs; and so great is the shabbiness and laziness, that you might fancy yourself in a convent in Italy. Brown-clad fathers, dirty, bearded, and sallow, go gliding about the corridors. The relic manufactory before mentioned carries on a considerable business, and despatches bales of shells, crosses, and beads to believers in Europe. These constitute the chief revenue of the convent now. *La France* is no longer the most Christian kingdom, and her protection of the Latins is not good for much since Charles X. was expelled; and Spain, which used likewise to be generous on occasions (the gifts, arms, candlesticks, baldaquins of the Spanish sovereigns figure pretty frequently in the various Latin chapels), has been stingy since the late disturbances, the spoliation of the clergy, &c. After we had been taken to see the humble curiosities of the place, the Prior treated us in his wooden parlour with little glasses of pink Rosolio, brought with many bows and genuflexions by his reverence the convent butler.

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After this community of holy men, the most important perhaps is the American Convent, a Protestant congregation of Independents chiefly, who deliver tracts, propose to make converts, have meetings of their own, and also swell the little congregation that attends the Anglican service. I have mentioned our fellow-traveller, the Consul-General for Syria of the United States. He was a tradesman, who had made a considerable fortune, and lived at a country-house in comfortable retirement. But his opinion is, that the prophecies of Scripture are about to be accomplished; that the day of the return of the Jews is at hand, and the glorification of the restored Jerusalem. He is to witness this—he and a favourite dove with which he travels; and he forsook home and comfortable country-house, in order to make this journey. He has no other knowledge of Syria but what he derives from the prophecy; and this (as he takes the office gratis) has been considered a sufficient reason for his appointment by the United States Government. As soon as he arrived, he sent and demanded an interview with the Pasha; explained to him his interpretation of the Apocalypse, in which he has discovered that the Five Powers and America are about to intervene in Syrian affairs, and the infallible return of the Jews to Palestine. The news must have astonished the Lieutenant of the Sublime Porte; and since the days of the Kingdom of Munster, under his Anabaptist Majesty John of Leyden, I doubt whether any Government has received or appointed so queer an ambassador. The kind, worthy, simple man took me to his temporary consulate-house at the American Missionary Establishment; and, under pretence of treating me to white wine, expounded his ideas; talked of futurity as he would about an article in *The Times;* and had no more doubt of seeing a divine kingdom established in Jerusalem than you that there would be a levée next spring at St. James's. The little room in which we sat was padded with missionary tracts, but I heard of scarce any converts—not more than are made by our own Episcopal establishment.

But if the latter's religious victories are small, and very few people are induced by the American tracts, and the English preaching and catechising, to forsake their own manner of worshipping the Divine Being in order to follow ours; yet surely our religious colony of men and women can't fail to do good, by the sheer force of good example, pure life, and kind

offices. The ladies of the mission have numbers of clients, of all persuasions, in the town, to whom they extend their charities. Each of their houses is a model of neatness, and a dispensary of gentle kindnesses; and the ecclesiastics have formed a modest centre of civilisation in the place. A dreary joke was made in the House of Commons about Bishop Alexander and the Bishopess his lady, and the Bishoplings his numerous children, who were said to have scandalised the people of Jerusalem.

That sneer evidently came from the Latins and Greeks; for what could the Jews and Turks care because an English clergyman had a wife and children as their own priests have? There was no sort of ill-will exhibited towards them, as far as I could learn; and I saw the Bishop's children riding about the town as safely as they could about Hyde Park. All Europeans, indeed, seemed to me to be received with forbearance, and almost courtesy, within the walls. As I was going about making sketches, the people would look on very good-humouredly,

without offering the least interruption; nay, two or three were quite ready to stand still for such an humble portrait as my pencil could make of them; and the sketch done, it was passed from one person to another, each making his comments, and signifying a very polite approval. Above are a pair of them, Fath Allah and Ameenut Daoodee his father, horse-dealers by trade, who came and sat with us at the inn, and smoked pipes (the sun being down), while the original of the above masterpiece was made. With the Arabs outside the walls, however, and the freshly arriving country people, this politeness was not so much exhibited. There was a certain tattooed girl, with black eyes and huge silver earrings, and a chin delicately picked out with blue, who formed one of a group of women outside the great convent, whose likeness I longed to carry off;—there was a woman with a little child, with wondering eyes, drawing water at the Pool of Siloam, in such an attitude and dress as Rebecca may have had when Isaac's lieutenant asked her for drink:—both of these parties standing still for half a minute, at the next cried out for backsheesh: and not content with the five piastres which I gave them individually, screamed out for more, and summoned their friends, who screamed out backsheesh too. I was pursued into the convent by a dozen howling women calling for pay, barring the door against them, to the astonishment of the worthy papa who kept it; and at Miriam's Well the women were joined by a man with a large stick, who backed their petition. But him we could afford to laugh at, for we were two and had sticks likewise.

In the village of Siloam I would not recommend the artist to loiter. A colony of ruffians inhabit the dismal place, who have guns as well as sticks at need. Their dogs howl after the strangers as they pass through; and over the parapets of their walls you are saluted by the scowls of a villainous set of countenances, that it is not good to see with one pair of eyes. They shot a man at mid-day at a few hundred yards from the gates while we were at Jerusalem, and no notice was taken of the murder. Hordes of Arab robbers infest the neighbourhood of the city, with the Sheikhs of whom travellers make terms when minded to pursue their journey. I never could understand why the walls stopped these warriors if they had a mind to plunder the city, for there are but a hundred and fifty men in the garrison to man the long lonely lines of defence.

I have seen only in Titian's pictures those magnificent purple shadows in which the hills round about lay, as the dawn rose faintly behind them; and we looked at Olivet for the last time from our terrace, where we were awaiting the arrival of the horses that were to carry us to Jaffa. A yellow moon was still blazing in the midst of countless brilliant stars overhead; the nakedness and misery of the surrounding city were hidden in that beautiful rosy atmosphere of mingling night and dawn. The city never looked so noble; the mosques, domes, and minarets rising up into the calm star-lit sky.

By the gate of Bethlehem there stands one palm-tree, and a house with three domes. Put these and the huge old Gothic gate as a background dark against the yellowing eastern sky: the foreground is a deep grey: as you look into it dark forms of horsemen come out of the twilight: now there come lanterns, more horsemen, a litter with mules, a crowd of Arab horseboys and dealers accompanying their beasts to the gate; all the members of our party come up by twos and threes; and, at last, the great gate opens just before sunrise, and we get into the grey plains.

Oh! the luxury of an English saddle! An English servant of one of the gentlemen of the mission procured it for me, on the back of a little mare, which (as I am a light weight) did not turn a hair in the course of the day's march—and after we got quit of the ugly, stony, clattering, mountainous Abou Gosh district, into the fair undulating plain, which stretches to Ramleh, carried me into the town at a pleasant hand-gallop. A negro, of preternatural ugliness, in a yellow gown, with a crimson handkerchief streaming over his head, digging his shovel spurs into the lean animal he rode, and driving three others before—swaying backwards and forwards on his horse, now embracing his ears, and now almost under his belly, screaming "yallah" with the most frightful shrieks, and singing country songs—galloped along ahead of me. I acquired one of his poems pretty well, and could imitate his shriek accurately; but I shall not have the pleasure of singing it to you in England. I had forgotten the delightful dissonance two days after, both the negro's and that of a real Arab minstrel, a donkey-driver accompanying our baggage, who sang and grinned with the most amusing good-humour.

We halted, in the middle of the day, in a little wood of olive-

trees, which forms almost the only shelter between Jaffa and Jerusalem, except that afforded by the orchards in the odious village of Abou Gosh, through which we went at a double quick pace. Under the olives, or up in the branches, some of our friends took a siesta. I have a sketch of four of them so employed. Two of them were dead within a month of the fatal Syrian fever. But we did not know how near fate was to us then. Fires were lighted, and fowls and eggs divided, and tea and coffee served round in tin panikins, and here we lighted pipes, and smoked and laughed at our ease. I believe everybody was happy to be out of Jerusalem. The impression I have of it now is of ten days passed in a fever.

We all found quarters in the Greek convent at Ramleh, where the monks served us a supper on a terrace, in a pleasant sunset; a beautiful and cheerful landscape stretching around; the land in graceful undulations, the towers and mosques rosy in the sunset, with no lack of verdure, especially of graceful palms. Jaffa was nine miles off. As we rode all the morning we had been accompanied by the smoke of our steamer, twenty miles off at sea.

The convent is a huge caravanserai; only three or four monks dwell in it, the ghostly hotel-keepers of the place. The horses were tied up and fed in the courtyard, into which we rode; above were the living-rooms, where there is accommodation, not only for an unlimited number of pilgrims, but for a vast and innumerable host of hopping and crawling things, who usually persist in partaking of the traveller's bed. Let all thin-skinned travellers in the East be warned on no account to travel without the admirable invention described in Mr. Fellowes's book; nay, possibly invented by that enterprising and learned traveller. You make a sack, of calico or linen, big enough for the body, appended to which is a closed chimney of muslin, stretched out by cane hoops, and fastened up to a beam, or against the wall. You keep a sharp eye to see that no flea or bug is on the look-out, and when assured of this, you pop into the bag, tightly closing the orifice after you. This admirable bug-disappointer I tried at Ramleh, and had the only undisturbed night's rest I enjoyed in the East. To be sure it was a short night, for our party were stirring at one o'clock, and those who got up insisted on talking and keeping awake those who inclined to sleep. But I shall never forget the terror inspired in my mind, being shut

up in the bug disappointer, when a facetious lay-brother of the convent fell upon me and began *tickling* me. I never had the courage again to try the anti-flea contrivance, preferring the friskiness of those animals to the sports of such a greasy grinning wag as my friend at Ramleh.

In the morning, and long before sunrise, our little caravan was in marching order again. We went out with lanterns and shouts of "yallah" through the narrow streets, and issued into the plain, where, though there was no moon, there were blazing stars shining steadily overhead. They become friends to a man who travels, especially under the clear Eastern sky; whence they look down as if protecting you, solemn, yellow, and refulgent. They seem *nearer* to you than in Europe; larger and more awful. So we rode on till the dawn rose, and Jaffa came in view. The friendly ship was lying out in waiting for us; the horses were given up to their owners; and in the midst of a crowd of naked beggars, and a perfect storm of curses and yells for backsheesh, our party got into their boats, and to the ship, where we were welcomed by the very best captain that ever sailed upon this maritime globe, namely, Captain Samuel Lewis, of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Service.

CHAPTER XIV.

From Jaffa to Alexandria.

[FROM THE PROVIDOR'S LOG-BOOK.]

BILL OF FARE, *October 12th.*

Mulligatawny Soup.	Curry and Rice.
Salt Fish and Egg Sauce.	Cabbage.
Roast Haunch of Mutton.	French Beans.
Boiled Shoulder and Onion Sauce.	Boiled Potatoes.
Boiled Beef.	Baked ditto.
Roast Fowls.	Damson Tart.
Pillau ditto.	Currant ditto.
Ham.	Rice Puddings.
Haricot Mutton.	Currant Fritters.

WE were just at the port's mouth—and could see the towers and buildings of Alexandria rising purple against the sunset, when

the report of a gun came booming over the calm golden water; and we heard, with much mortification, that we had no chance of getting pratique that night. Already the ungrateful passengers had begun to tire of the ship,—though in our absence in Syria it had been carefully cleansed and purified; though it was cleared of the swarming Jews who had infested the decks all the way from Constantinople; and though we had been feasting and carousing in the manner described above.

But very early next morning we bore into the harbour, busy with a great quantity of craft. We passed huge black hulks of mouldering men-of-war, from the sterns of which trailed the dirty red flag, with the star and crescent; boats, manned with red-capped seamen, and captains and steersmen in beards and tarbooshes, passed continually among these old hulks, the rowers bending to their oars, so that at each stroke they disappeared bodily in the boat. Besides these, there was a large fleet of country ships, and stars and stripes, and tricolours, and Union

Jacks; and many active steamers, of the French and English companies, shooting in and out of the harbour, or moored in the briny waters. The ship of *our* company, the "Oriental," lay there—a palace upon the brine, and some of the Pasha's steam-vessels likewise, looking very like Christian boats; but it was queer to look at some unintelligible Turkish flourish painted on the stern, and the long-tailed Arabian hieroglyphics gilt on the paddle-boxes. Our dear friend and comrade of Beyrout (if we may be permitted to call her so), H.M.S. "Trump," was in the harbour; and the captain of that gallant ship, coming to greet us, drove some of us on shore in his gig.

I had been preparing myself overnight, by the help of a cigar and a moonlight contemplation on deck, for sensations on landing in Egypt. I was ready to yield myself up with solemnity to the mystic grandeur of the scene of initiation. Pompey's Pillar must stand like a mountain, in a yellow plain, surrounded by a grove of obelisks as tall as palm-trees. Placid sphinxes brooding o'er the Nile—mighty Memnonian countenances calm—had revealed Egypt to me in a sonnet of Tennyson's, and I was ready to gaze on it with pyramidal wonder and hieroglyphic awe.

The landing quay at Alexandria is like the dockyard quay at Portsmouth: with a few score of brown faces scattered among the population. There are slop-sellers, dealers in marine-stores, bottled-porter shops, seamen lolling about; flys and cabs are plying for hire; and a yelling chorus of donkey-boys, shrieking, "Ride, sir!—Donkey, sir!—I say, sir!" in excellent English, dispel all romantic notions. The placid sphinxes brooding o'er the Nile disappeared with that shriek of the donkey-boys. You might be as well impressed with Wapping as with your first step on Egyptian soil.

The riding of a donkey is, after all, not a dignified occupation. A man resists the offer at first, somehow, as an indignity. How is that poor little, red-saddled, long-eared creature to carry you? Is there to be one for you, and another for your legs? Natives and Europeans, of all sizes, pass by, it is true, mounted upon the same contrivance. I waited until I got into a very private spot, where nobody could see me, and then ascended—why not say descended at once?—on the poor little animal. Instead of being crushed at once, as perhaps the rider expected, it darted forward, quite briskly and cheerfully, at six or seven miles an

hour; requiring no spur or admonitive to haste, except the shrieking of the little Egyptian gamin, who ran along by asinus's side.

The character of the houses by which you pass is scarcely Eastern at all. The streets are busy with a motley population of Jews and Armenians, slave-driving-looking Europeans, large-breeched Greeks, and well-shaven buxom merchants, looking as trim and fat as those on the Bourse or on 'Change; only, among the natives, the stranger can't fail to remark (as the Caliph did of the Calenders in the "Arabian Nights") that so many of them *have only one eye*. It is the horrid ophthalmia which has played such frightful ravages with them. You see children sitting in the doorways, their eyes completely closed up with the green sickening sore, and the flies feeding on them. Five or six minutes of the donkey-ride brings you to the Frank quarter, and the handsome broad street (like a street of Marseilles) where the principal hotels and merchants' houses are to be found, and where the consuls have their houses, and hoist their flags. The palace of the French Consul-General makes the grandest show in the street, and presents a great contrast to the humble abode of the English representative, who protects his fellow-countrymen from a second floor.

But that Alexandrian two-pair-front of a Consulate was more welcome and cheering than a palace to most of us. For there lay certain letters, with post-marks of *Home* upon them; and kindly tidings, the first heard for two months:—though we had seen so many men and cities since, that Cornhill seemed to be a year off, at least, with certain persons dwelling (more or less) in that vicinity. I saw a young Oxford man seize his despatches, and slink off with several letters, written in a tight neat hand, and sedulously crossed; which any man could see, without looking farther, were the handiwork of Mary Ann, to whom he is attached. The lawyer received a bundle from his chambers, in which his clerk eased his soul regarding the state of Snooks *v.* Rodgers, Smith *ats* Tomkins, &c. The statesman had a packet of thick envelopes, decorated with that profusion of sealing-wax in which official recklessness lavishes the resources of the country: and your humble servant got just one little modest letter, containing another, written in pencil characters, varying in size between one and two inches; but how much pleasanter to read than my Lord's despatch, or the clerk's account of Smith *ats*

Tomkins,—yes, even than the Mary Ann correspondence! . . . Yes, my dear madam, you will understand me, when I say that it was from little Polly at home, with some confidential news about a cat, and the last report of her new doll.

It is worth while to have made the journey for this pleasure: to have walked the deck on long nights, and have thought of home. You have no leisure to do so in the city. You don't see the heavens shine above you so purely there, or the stars so clearly. How, after the perusal of the above documents, we enjoyed a file of the admirable *Galignani;* and what O'Connell was doing; and the twelve last new victories of the French in Algeria; and, above all, six or seven numbers of *Punch!* There might have been an avenue of Pompey's Pillars within reach, and a live sphinx sporting on the banks of the Mahmoodieh Canal, and we would not have stirred to see them, until *Punch* had had his interview and *Galignani* was dismissed.

The curiosities of Alexandria are few, and easily seen. We went into the bazaars, which have a much more Eastern look than the European quarter, with its Anglo-Gallic-Italian inhabitants, and Babel-like civilisation. Here and there a large hotel, clumsy and whitewashed, with Oriental trellised windows, and a couple of slouching sentinels at the doors, in the ugliest composite uniform that ever was seen, was pointed out as the residence of some great officer of the Pasha's Court, or of one of the numerous children of the Egyptian Solomon. His Highness was in his own palace, and was consequently not visible. He was in deep grief, and strict retirement. It was at this time that the European newspapers announced that he was about to resign his empire; but the quidnuncs of Alexandria hinted that a love-affair, in which the old potentate had engaged with senile extravagance, and the effects of a potion of hachisch, or some deleterious drug, with which he was in the habit of intoxicating himself, had brought on that languor and desperate weariness of life and governing, into which the venerable Prince was plunged. Before three days were over, however, the fit had left him, and he determined to live and reign a little longer. A very few days afterwards several of our party were presented to him at Cairo, and found the great Egyptian ruler perfectly convalescent.

This, and the Opera, and the quarrels of the two *prime donne*, and the beauty of one of them, formed the chief subjects of con-

versation; and I had this important news in the shop of a certain barber in the town, who conveyed it in a language composed of French, Spanish, and Italian, and with a volubility quite worthy of a barber of "Gil Blas."

Then we went to see the famous obelisk presented by Mehemet Ali to the British Government, who have not shown a particular alacrity to accept this ponderous present. The huge shaft lies on the ground, prostrate, and desecrated by all sorts of abominations. Children were sprawling about, attracted by the dirt there. Arabs, negroes, and donkey-boys were passing, quite indifferent, by the fallen monster of a stone—as indifferent as the British Government, who don't care for recording the glorious termination of their Egyptian campaign of 1801. If our country takes the compliment so coolly, surely it would be disloyal upon our parts to be more enthusiastic. I wish they would offer the Trafalgar Square Pillar to the Egyptians; and that both of the huge ugly monsters were lying in the dirt there side by side.

Pompey's Pillar is by no means so big as the Charing Cross trophy. This venerable column has not escaped ill-treatment either. Numberless ships' companies, travelling cockneys, &c., have affixed their rude marks upon it. Some daring ruffian even painted the name of "Warren's Blacking" upon it, effacing other inscriptions,—one, Wilkinson says, of "the second Psammetichus." I regret deeply, my dear friend, that I cannot give you this document respecting a lamented monarch, in whose history I know you take such an interest.

The best sight I saw in Alexandria was a negro holiday; which was celebrated outside of the town by a sort of negro village of huts, swarming with old, lean, fat, ugly, infantine, happy faces, that nature had smeared with a preparation even more black and durable than that with which Psammetichus's base has been polished. Every one of these jolly faces was on the broad grin, from the dusky mother to the india-rubber child sprawling upon her back, and the venerable jetty senior whose wool was as white as that of a sheep in Florian's pastorals.

To these dancers a couple of fellows were playing on a drum and a little banjo. They were singing a chorus, which was not only singular, and perfectly marked in the rhythm, but exceeding sweet in the tune. They danced in a circle; and

performers came trooping from all quarters, who fell into the round, and began waggling their heads, and waving their left hands, and tossing up and down the little thin rods which they each carried, and all singing to the very best of their power.

I saw the chief eunuch of the Grand Turk at Constantinople pass by—(here is an accurate likeness of his beautiful features)

—but with what a different expression! Though he is one of the greatest of the great in the Turkish Empire (ranking with a Cabinet Minister or Lord Chamberlain here), his fine countenance was clouded with care, and savage with ennui.

Here his black brethren were ragged, starving, and happy; and I need not tell such a fine moralist as you are, how it is the case, in the white as well as the black world, that happiness (republican leveller, who does not care a fig for the fashion!) often disdains the turrets of kings, to pay a visit to the "tabernas pauperum."

We went the round of the coffee-houses in the evening, both the polite European places of resort, where you get ices and the French papers, and those in the town, where Greeks, Turks, and general company resort, to sit upon uncomfortable chairs, and drink wretched muddy coffee, and to listen to two or

three miserable musicians, who keep up a variation of howling for hours together. But the pretty song of the niggers had spoiled me for that abominable music.

CHAPTER XV.

To Cairo.

We had no need of hiring the country boats which ply on the Mahmoodieh Canal to Atfeh, where it joins the Nile, but were accommodated in one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's fly-boats; pretty similar to those narrow Irish canal boats in which the enterprising traveller has been carried from Dublin to Ballinasloe. The present boat was, to be sure, tugged by a little steamer, so that the Egyptian canal is ahead of the Irish in so far: in natural scenery, the one prospect is fully equal to the other; it must be confessed that there is nothing to see. In truth, there was nothing but this: you saw a muddy bank on each side of you, and a blue sky overhead. A few round mud-huts and palm-trees were planted along the line here and there. Sometimes we would see, on the water-side, a woman in a blue robe, with her son by her, in that tight brown costume with which nature had supplied him. Now, it was a hat dropped by one of the party into the water; a brown Arab plunged and disappeared incontinently after the hat, re-issued from the muddy water, prize in hand, and ran naked after the little steamer (which was by this time far ahead of him), his brawny limbs shining in the sun: then we had half-cold fowls and bitter ale: then we had dinner—bitter ale and cold fowls; with which incidents the day on the canal passed away, as harmlessly as if we had been in a Dutch trackschuyt.

Towards evening we arrived at the town of Atfeh—half land, half houses, half palm-trees, with swarms of half-naked people crowding the rustic shady bazaars, and bartering their produce of fruit or many-coloured grain. Here the canal came to a check, ending abruptly with a large lock. A little fleet of masts and country ships were beyond the lock, and it led into The Nile.

After all, it is something to have seen these red waters. It is

only low green banks, mud-huts, and palm-clumps, with the sun setting red behind them, and the great, dull, sinuous river flashing here and there in the light. But it is the Nile, the old Saturn of a stream—a divinity yet, though younger river-gods have deposed him. Hail! O venerable father of crocodiles! We were all lost in sentiments of the profoundest awe and respect; which we proved by tumbling down into the cabin of the Nile steamer that was waiting to receive us, and fighting and cheating for sleeping-berths.

At dawn in the morning we were on deck; the character had not altered of the scenery about the river. Vast flat stretches of land were on either side, recovering from the subsiding inundations: near the mud villages, a country ship or two was roosting under the date-trees; the landscape everywhere stretching away level and lonely. In the sky in the east was a long streak of greenish light, which widened and rose until it grew to be of an opal colour, then orange; then, behold, the round red disc of the sun rose flaming up above the horizon. All the water blushed as he got up; the deck was all red; the steersman gave his helm to another, and prostrated himself on the deck, and bowed his head eastward, and praised the Maker of the sun: it shone on his white turban as he was kneeling, and gilt up his bronzed face, and sent his blue shadow over the glowing deck. The distances, which had been grey, were now clothed in purple; and the broad stream was illuminated. As the sun rose higher, the morning blush faded away; the sky was cloudless and pale, and the river and the surrounding landscape were dazzlingly clear.

Looking ahead in an hour or two, we saw the Pyramids. Fancy my sensations, dear M——: two big ones and a little one—

! ! !

There they lay, rosy and solemn in the distance—those old, majestical, mystical, familiar edifices. Several of us tried to be impressed; but breakfast supervening, a rush was made at the coffee and cold pies, and the sentiment of awe was lost in the scramble for victuals.

Are we so blasés of the world that the greatest marvels in it

do not succeed in moving us? Have society, Pall Mall clubs, and a habit of sneering, so withered up our organs of veneration that we can admire no more? My sensation with regard to the Pyramids was, that I had seen them before: then came a feeling of shame that the view of them should awaken no respect. Then I wanted (naturally) to see whether my neighbours were any more enthusiastic than myself—Trinity College, Oxford, was busy with the cold ham: Downing Street was particularly attentive to a bunch of grapes: Figtree Court behaved with decent propriety; he is in good practice, and of a Conservative turn of mind, which leads him to respect from principle *les faits accomplis*: perhaps he remembered that one of them was as big as Lincoln's Inn Fields. But, the truth is, nobody was seriously moved. . . . And why should they, because of an exaggeration of bricks ever so enormous? I confess, for my part, that the Pyramids are very big.

After a voyage of about thirty hours, the steamer brought up at the quay of Boulak, amidst a small fleet of dirty comfortless cangias, in which cottons and merchandise were loading and unloading, and a huge noise and bustle on the shore. Numerous villas, parks, and country-houses had begun to decorate the Cairo bank of the stream ere this: residences of the Pasha's nobles, who have had orders to take their pleasure here and beautify the precincts of the capital; tall factory chimneys also rise here; there are foundries and steam-engine manufactories. These, and the pleasure-houses, stand as trim as soldiers on parade; contrasting with the swarming, slovenly, close, tumble-down, Eastern old town, that forms the outport of Cairo, and was built before the importation of European taste and discipline.

Here we alighted upon donkeys, to the full as brisk as those of Alexandria, invaluable to timid riders, and equal to any weight. We had a Jerusalem pony race into Cairo; my animal beating all the rest by many lengths. The entrance to the capital, from Boulak, is very pleasant and picturesque—over a fair road, and the wide-planted plain of the Ezbekieh; where are gardens, canals, fields, and avenues of trees, and where the great ones of the town come and take their pleasure. We saw many barouches driving about with fat Pashas lolling on the cushions; stately-looking colonels and doctors taking their ride,

followed by their orderlies or footmen; lines of people taking pipes and sherbet in the coffee-houses; and one of the pleasantest sights of all,—a fine new white building with HÔTEL D'ORIENT written up in huge French characters, and which, indeed, is an establishment as large and comfortable as most of the best inns of the South of France. As a hundred Christian people, or more, come from England and from India every fortnight, this inn has been built to accommodate a large proportion of them; and twice a month, at least, its sixty rooms are full.

The gardens from the windows give a very pleasant and animated view: the hotel-gate is besieged by crews of donkey-drivers; the noble stately Arab women, with tawny skins (of which a simple robe of floating blue cotton enables you liberally to see the colour) and large black eyes, come to the well hard by for water: camels are perpetually arriving and setting down their loads; the court is full of bustling dragomans, ayahs, and children from India; and poor old venerable he-nurses, with grey beards and crimson turbans, tending little white-faced babies that have seen the light at Dumdum or Futtyghur: a copper-coloured barber, seated on his hams, is shaving a camel-driver at the great inn-gate. The bells are ringing prodigiously; and Lieutenant Waghorn is bouncing in and out of the court-yard full of business. He only left Bombay yesterday morning, was seen in the Red Sea on Tuesday, is engaged to dinner this afternoon in the Regent's Park, and (as it is about two minutes since I saw him in the courtyard) I make no doubt he is by this time at Alexandria, or at Malta, say, perhaps, at both. *Il en est capable.* If any man can be at two places at once (which I don't believe or deny) Waghorn is he.

Six o'clock bell rings. Sixty people sit down to a quasi-French banquet: thirty Indian officers in moustaches and jackets; ten civilians in ditto and spectacles; ten pale-faced ladies with ringlets, to whom all pay prodigious attention. All the pale ladies drink pale ale, which, perhaps, accounts for it; in fact the Bombay and Suez passengers have just arrived, and hence this crowding and bustling, and display of military jackets and moustaches, and ringlets and beauty. The windows are open, and a rush of mosquitoes from the Ezbekieh waters, attracted by the wax candles, adds greatly to the excitement of the scene. There was a little tough old Major, who persisted in flinging open the windows, to admit these volatile creatures, with a noble

disregard to their sting—and the pale ringlets did not seem to heed them either, though the delicate shoulders of some of them were bare.

All the meat, ragoûts, fricandeaux, and roasts, which are served round at dinner, seem to me to be of the same meat: a black uncertain sort of viand do these "fleshpots of Egypt" contain. But what the meat is no one knew: is it the donkey? The animal is more plentiful than any other in Cairo.

After dinner, the ladies retiring, some of us take a mixture of hot water, sugar, and pale French brandy, which is said to be deleterious, but is by no means unpalatable. One of the Indians offers a bundle of Bengal cheroots; and we make acquaintance with those honest bearded white-jacketed Majors and military Commanders, finding England here in a French hotel kept by an Italian, at the city of Grand Cairo, in Africa.

On retiring to bed you take a towel with you into the sacred interior, behind the mosquito curtains. Then your duty is, having tucked the curtains closely around, to flap and bang violently with this towel, right and left, and backwards and forwards, until every mosquito should have been massacred that may have taken refuge within your muslin canopy.

Do what you will, however, one of them always escapes the murder; and as soon as the candle is out the miscreant begins his infernal droning and trumpeting; descends playfully upon your nose and face, and so lightly that you don't know that he touches you. But that for a week afterwards you bear about marks of his ferocity, you might take the invisible little being to be a creature of fancy—a mere singing in your ears.

This, as an account of Cairo, dear M——, you will probably be disposed to consider as incomplete: the fact is, I have seen nothing else as yet. I have peered into no harems. The magicians, proved to be humbugs, have been bastinadoed out of town. The dancing-girls, those lovely Alme, of whom I had hoped to be able to give a glowing and elegant, though strictly moral, description, have been whipped into Upper Egypt, and as you are saying in your mind—— Well, it *isn't* a good description of Cairo: you are perfectly right. It is England in Egypt. I like to see her there with her pluck, enterprise, manliness, bitter ale, and Harvey Sauce. Wherever they come they stay and prosper. From the summit of yonder Pyramids forty centuries may look down on them if they are minded;

and I say, those venerable daughters of time ought to be better pleased by the examination, than by regarding the French bayonets and General Bonaparte, Member of the Institute, fifty years ago, running about with sabre and pigtail. Wonders he did, to be sure, and then ran away, leaving Kleber, to be murdered, in the lurch—a few hundred yards from the spot where these disquisitions are written. But what are his wonders compared to Waghorn? Nap massacred the Mamelukes at the Pyramids: Wag has conquered the Pyramids themselves; dragged the unwieldy structures a month nearer England than they were, and brought the country along with them. All the trophies and captives that ever were brought to Roman triumph were not so enormous and wonderful as this. All the heads that Napoleon ever caused to be struck off (as George Cruikshank says) would not elevate him a monument as big. Be ours the trophies of peace! O my country! O Waghorn! *Hæ tibi erunt artes.* When I go to the Pyramids I will sacrifice in your name, and pour out libations of bitter ale and Harvey Sauce in your honour.

One of the noblest views in the world is to be seen from the citadel, which we ascended to-day. You see the city stretching beneath it, with a thousand minarets and mosques,—the great river curling through the green plains, studded with innumerable villages. The Pyramids are beyond, brilliantly distinct; and the lines and fortifications of the height, and the arsenal lying below. Gazing down, the guide does not fail to point out the famous Mameluke leap, by which one of the corps escaped death, at the time that His Highness the Pasha arranged the general massacre of the body.

The venerable Patriarch's harem is close by, where he received, with much distinction, some of the members of our party. We were allowed to pass very close to the sacred precincts, and saw a comfortable white European building, approached by flights of steps, and flanked by pretty gardens. Police and law-courts were here also, as I understood; but it was not the time of the Egyptian assizes. It would have been pleasant, otherwise, to see the Chief Cadi in his hall of justice; and painful, though instructive, to behold the immediate application of the bastinado.

The great lion of the place is a new mosque which Mehemet Ali is constructing very leisurely. It is built of alabaster of a

fair white, with a delicate blushing tinge; but the ornaments are European—the noble, fantastic, beautiful Oriental art is forgotten. The old mosques of the city, of which I entered two, and looked at many, are a thousand times more beautiful. Their variety of ornament is astonishing,—the difference in the shapes of the domes, the beautiful fancies and caprices in the forms of the minarets, which violate the rules of proportion with the most happy daring grace, must have struck every architect who has seen them. As you go through the streets, these architectural beauties keep the eye continually charmed: now it is a marble fountain, with its arabesque and carved overhanging roof, which you can look at with as much pleasure as an antique gem, so neat and brilliant is the execution of it; then, you come to the arched entrance to a mosque, which shoots up like—like what?—like the most beautiful pirouette by Taglioni, let us say. This architecture is not sublimely beautiful, perfect loveliness and calm, like that which was revealed to us at the Parthenon (and in comparison of which the Pantheon and Colosseum are vulgar and coarse, mere broad-shouldered Titans before ambrosial Jove); but these fantastic spires, and cupolas, and galleries, excite, amuse, *tickle* the imagination, so to speak, and perpetually fascinate the eye. There were very few believers in the famous mosque of Sultan Hassan when we visited it, except the Moslemitish beadle, who was on the look-out for backsheesh, just like his brother officer in an English cathedral; and who, making us put on straw slippers, so as not to pollute the sacred pavement of the place, conducted us through it.

It is stupendously light and airy; the best specimens of Norman art that I have seen (and surely the Crusaders must have carried home the models of these heathenish temples in their eyes) do not exceed its noble grace and simplicity. The mystics make discoveries at home, that the Gothic architecture is Catholicism carved in stone—(in which case, and if architectural beauty is a criterion or expression of religion, what a dismal barbarous creed must that expressed by the Bethesda meeting-house and Independent chapels be?)—if, as they would gravely hint, because Gothic architecture is beautiful, Catholicism is therefore lovely and right,—why, Mahometanism must have been right and lovely too once. Never did a creed possess temples more elegant; as elegant as the Cathedral at Rouen, or the Baptistery at Pisa.

But it is changed now. There was nobody at prayers; only the official beadles, and the supernumerary guides, who came for backsheesh. Faith hath degenerated. Accordingly they can't build these mosques, or invent these perfect forms, any more. Witness the tawdry incompleteness and vulgarity of the Pasha's new temple, and the woeful failures among the very late edifices in Constantinople!

However, they still make pilgrimages to Mecca in great force. The Mosque of Hassan is hard by the green plain on which the *Hag* encamps before it sets forth annually on its pious peregrination. It was not yet its time, but I saw in the bazaars that redoubted Dervish, who is the master of the Hag —the leader of every procession, accompanying the sacred camel; and a personage almost as much respected as Mr. O'Connell in Ireland.

This fellow lives by alms (I mean the head of the Hag). Winter and summer he wears no clothes but a thin and scanty white shirt. He wields a staff, and stalks along scowling and barefoot. His immense shock of black hair streams behind him, and his brown brawny body is curled over with black hair, like a savage man. This saint has the largest harem in the town; he is said to be enormously rich by the contributions he has levied; and is so adored for his holiness by the infatuated folk, that when he returns from the Hag (which he does on horseback, the chief Mollahs going out to meet him and escort him home in state along the Ezbekieh road), the people fling themselves down under the horse's feet, eager to be trampled upon and killed, and confident of heaven if the great Hadji's horse will but kick them into it. Was it my fault if I thought of Hadji Daniel, and the believers in him?

There was no Dervish of repute on the plain when I passed; only one poor wild fellow, who was dancing, with glaring eyes and grizzled beard, rather to the contempt of the bystanders, as I thought, who by no means put coppers into his extended bowl. On this poor devil's head there was a poorer devil still —a live cock, entirely plucked, but ornamented with some bits of ragged tape and scarlet and tinsel, the most horribly grotesque and miserable object I ever saw.

A little way from him, there was a sort of play going on—a clown and a knowing one, like Widdicombe and the clown with us,—the buffoon answering with blundering responses, which

made all the audience shout with laughter; but the only joke which was translated to me would make you do anything but laugh, and shall therefore never be revealed by these lips. All their humour, my dragoman tells me, is of this questionable sort; and a young Egyptian gentleman, son of a Pasha, whom I subsequently met at Malta, confirmed the statement, and gave a detail of the practices of private life which was anything but edifying. The great aim of woman, he said, in the much-maligned Orient, is to administer to the brutality of her lord; her merit is in knowing how to vary the beast's pleasures. He could give us no idea, he said, of the *wit* of the Egyptian women, and their skill in *double entendre;* nor, I presume, did we lose much by our ignorance. What I would urge, humbly, however, is this—Do not let us be led away by German writers and æsthetics, Semilassoisms, Hahnhahnisms, and the like. The life of the East is a life of brutes. The much-maligned Orient, I am confident, has not been maligned near enough; for the good reason that none of us can tell the amount of horrible sensuality practised there.

Beyond the Jack-pudding rascal and his audience, there was on the green a spot, on which was pointed out to me a mark, as of blood. That morning the blood had spouted from the neck of an Arnaoot soldier, who had been executed for murder. These Arnaoots are the curse and terror of the citizens. Their camps are without the city; but they are always brawling, or drunken, or murdering within, in spite of the rigid law which is applied to them, and which brings one or more of the scoundrels to death almost every week.

Some of our party had seen this fellow borne by the hotel the day before, in the midst of a crowd of soldiers who had apprehended him. The man was still formidable to his score of captors: his clothes had been torn off; his limbs were bound with cords; but he was struggling frantically to get free; and my informant described the figure and appearance of the naked, bound, writhing savage, as quite a model of beauty.

Walking in the street, this fellow had just before been struck by the looks of a woman who was passing, and laid hands on her. She ran away, and he pursued her. She ran into the police-barrack, which was luckily hard by; but the Arnaoot was nothing daunted, and followed into the midst of the police. One of them tried to stop him. The Arnaoot pulled out a

pistol, and shot the policeman dead. He cut down three or four more before he was secured. He knew his inevitable end must be death: that he could not seize upon the woman: that he could not hope to resist half a regiment of armed soldiers: yet his instinct of lust and murder was too strong; and so he had his head taken off quite calmly this morning, many of his comrades attending their brother's last moments. He cared not the least about dying; and knelt down and had his head off as coolly as if he were looking on at the same ceremony performed on another.

When the head was off, and the blood was spouting on the ground, a married woman, who had no children, came forward very eagerly out of the crowd, to smear herself with it,—the application of criminals' blood being considered a very favourable medicine for women afflicted with barrenness;—so she indulged in this remedy.

But one of the Arnaoots standing near said, "What, you like blood, do you?" (or words to that effect). "Let's see how yours mixes with my comrade's." And thereupon, taking out a pistol, he shot the woman in the midst of the crowd and the guards who were attending the execution; was seized of course by the latter; and no doubt to-morrow morning will have *his* head off too. It would be a good chapter to write—the Death of the Arnaoot—but I shan't go. Seeing one man hanged is quite enough in the course of a life. *J'y ai été*, as the Frenchman said of hunting.

These Arnaoots are the terror of the town. They seized hold of an Englishman the other day, and were very nearly pistolling him. Last week one of them murdered a shopkeeper at Boulak, who refused to sell him a water-melon at a price which he, the soldier, fixed upon it. So, for the matter of three-halfpence, he killed the shopkeeper; aud had his own rascally head chopped off, universally regretted by his friends. Why, I wonder, does not His Highness the Pasha invite the Arnaoots to a *dîjeuner* at the Citadel, as he did the Mamelukes, and serve them up the same sort of breakfast? The walls are considerably heightened since Emin Bey and his horse leapt them, and it is probable that not one of them would escape.

This sort of pistol practice is common enough here, it would appear; and not among the Arnaoots merely, but the higher orders. Thus, a short time since, one of His Highness's grand-

sons, whom I shall call Bluebeard Pasha (lest a revelation of the name of the said Pasha might interrupt our good relations with his country)—one of the young Pashas being rather backward in his education, and anxious to learn mathematics, and the elegant deportment of civilised life, sent to England for a tutor. I have heard he was a Cambridge man, and had learned both algebra and politeness under the Reverend Doctor Whizzle, of —— College.

One day when Mr. MacWhirter, B.A., was walking in Shoubra Gardens, with His Highness the young Bluebeard Pasha, inducting him into the usages of polished society, and favouring him with reminiscences of Trumpington, there came up a poor fellah, who flung himself at the feet of young Bluebeard, and calling for justice in a loud and pathetic voice, and holding out a petition, besought His Highness to cast a gracious eye upon the same, and see that his slave had justice done him.

Bluebeard Pasha was so deeply engaged and interested by his respected tutor's conversation, that he told the poor fellah to go to the deuce, and resumed the discourse which his ill-timed outcry for justice had interrupted. But the unlucky wight of a fellah was pushed by his evil destiny, and thought he would make yet another application. So he took a short cut down one of the garden lanes, and as the Prince and the Reverend Mr. MacWhirter, his tutor, came along once more engaged in pleasant disquisition, behold the fellah was once more in their way, kneeling at the august Bluebeard's feet, yelling out for justice as before, and thrusting his petition into the Royal face.

When the Prince's conversation was thus interrupted a second time, his Royal patience and clemency were at an end. "Man," said he, "once before I bade thee not to pester me with thy clamour, and lo! you have disobeyed me,—take the consequences of disobedience to a Prince, and thy blood be upon thine own head." So saying, he drew out a pistol and blew out the brains of that fellah, so that he never bawled out for justice any more.

The Reverend Mr. MacWhirter was astonished at this sudden mode of proceeding: "Gracious Prince," said he, "we do not shoot an undergraduate at Cambridge even for walking over a college grass-plot. Let me suggest to your Royal Highness that this method of ridding yourself of a poor devil's importunities

is such as we should consider abrupt and almost cruel in Europe. Let me beg you to moderate your Royal impetuosity for the future; and, as your Highness's tutor, entreat you to be a little less prodigal of your powder and shot."

"O Mollah!" said His Highness, here interrupting his governor's affectionate appeal,—"you are good to talk about Trumpington and the Pons Asinorum, but if you interfere with the course of justice in any way, or prevent me from shooting any dog of an Arab who snarls at my heels, I have another pistol; and, by the beard of the Prophet! a bullet for you too." So saying he pulled out the weapon, with such a terrific and significant glance at the Reverend Mr. MacWhirter, that that gentleman wished himself back in his Combination Room again; and is by this time, let us hope, safely housed there.

Another facetious anecdote, the last of those I had from a well-informed gentleman residing at Cairo, whose name (as many copies of this book that is to be will be in the circulating libraries there) I cannot, for obvious reasons, mention. The revenues of the country come into the august treasury through the means of farmers, to whom the districts are let out, and who are personally answerable for their quota of the taxation. This practice involves an intolerable deal of tyranny and extortion on the part of those engaged to levy the taxes, and creates a corresponding duplicity among the fellahs, who are not only wretchedly poor among themselves, but whose object is to appear still more poor, and guard their money from their rapacious overseers. Thus the Orient is much maligned; but everybody cheats there: that is a melancholy fact. The Pasha robs and cheats the merchants; knows that the overseer robs him, and bides his time, until he makes him disgorge by the application of the tremendous bastinado; the overseer robs and squeezes the labourer; and the poverty-stricken devil cheats and robs in return; and so the government moves in a happy cycle of roguery.

Deputations from the fellahs and peasants come perpetually before the august presence, to complain of the cruelty and exactions of the chiefs set over them: but, as it is known that the Arab never will pay without the bastinado, their complaints, for the most part, meet with but little attention. His Highness's treasury must be filled, and his officers supported in their authority.

However, there was one village, of which the complaints

were so pathetic, and the inhabitants so supremely wretched, that the Royal indignation was moved at their story, and the chief of the village, Skinflint Beg, was called to give an account of himself at Cairo.

When he came before the presence, Mehemet Ali reproached him with his horrible cruelty and exactions; asked him how he dared to treat his faithful and beloved subjects in this way, and threatened him with disgrace, and the utter confiscation of his property, for thus having reduced a district to ruin.

"Your Highness says I have reduced these fellahs to ruin," said Skinflint Beg: "what is the best way to confound my enemies, and to show you the falsehood of their accusations that I have ruined them?—To bring more money from them. If I bring you five hundred purses from my village, will you acknowledge that my people are not ruined yet?"

The heart of the Pasha was touched: "I will have no more bastinadoing, O Skinflint Beg; you have tortured these poor people so much, and have got so little from them, that my Royal heart relents for the present, and I will have them suffer no farther."

"Give me free leave—give me your Highness's gracious pardon, and I will bring the five hundred purses as surely as my name is Skinflint Beg. I demand only the time to go home, the time to return, and a few days to stay, and I will come back as honestly as Regulus Pasha did to the Carthaginians,—I will come back and make my face white before your Highness."

Skinflint Beg's prayer for a reprieve was granted, and he returned to his village, where he forthwith called the elders together. "O friends," he said, "complaints of our poverty and misery have reached the Royal throne, and the benevolent heart of the Sovereign has been melted by the words that have been poured into his ears. 'My heart yearns towards my people of El Muddee,' he says; 'I have thought how to relieve their miseries. Near them lies the fruitful land of El Guanee. It is rich in maize and cotton, in sesame and barley; it is worth a thousand purses; but I will let it to my children for seven hundred, and I will give over the rest of the profit to them, as an alleviation for their affliction.'"

The elders of El Muddee knew the great value and fertility of the lands of Guanee, but they doubted the sincerity of their governor, who, however, dispelled their fears, and adroitly

quickened their eagerness to close with the proffered bargain. "I will myself advance two hundred and fifty purses," he said; "do you take counsel among yourselves, and subscribe the other five hundred; and when the sum is ready, a deputation of you shall carry it to Cairo, and I will come with my share; and we will lay the whole at the feet of His Highness." So the grey-bearded ones of the village advised with one another; and those who had been inaccessible to bastinadoes, somehow found money at the calling of interest; and the Sheikh, and they, and the five hundred purses, set off on the road to the capital.

When they arrived, Skinflint Beg and the elders of El Muddee sought admission to the Royal throne, and there laid down their purses. "Here is your humble servant's contribution," said Skinflint, producing his share; "and here is the offering of your loyal village of El Muddee. Did I not before say that enemies and deceivers had maligned me before the august presence, pretending that not a piastre was left in my village, and that my extortion had entirely denuded the peasantry? See! here is proof that there is plenty of money still in El Muddee: in twelve hours the elders have subscribed five hundred purses, and lay them at the feet of their lord."

Instead of the bastinado, Skinflint Beg was instantly rewarded with the Royal favour, and the former mark of attention was bestowed upon the fellahs who had maligned him; Skinflint Beg was promoted to the rank of Skinflint Bey; and his manner of extracting money from his people may be studied with admiration in a part of the United Kingdom.*

At the time of the Syrian quarrel, and when, apprehending some general rupture with England, the Pasha wished to raise the spirit of the fellahs, and *relever la morale nationale*, he actually made one of the astonished Arabs a colonel. He degraded him three days after peace was concluded. The young Egyptian colonel, who told me this, laughed and enjoyed the joke with the utmost gusto. "Is it not a shame," he said, "to make me a colonel at three-and-twenty; I, who have no particular merit, and have never seen any service?" Death has since stopped the modest and good-natured young fellow's further promotion. The death of —— Bey was announced in the French papers a few weeks back.

* At Derrynane Beg, for instance.

My above kind-hearted and agreeable young informant used to discourse, in our evenings in the Lazaretto at Malta, very eloquently about the beauty of his wife, whom he had left behind him at Cairo—her brown hair, her brilliant complexion, and her blue eyes. It is this Circassian blood, I suppose, to which the Turkish aristocracy that governs Egypt must be indebted for the fairness of their skin. Ibrahim Pasha, riding by in his barouche, looked like a bluff jolly-faced English dragoon officer, with a grey moustache and red cheeks, such as you might see on a field-day at Maidstone. All the numerous officials riding through the town were quite as fair as Europeans. We made acquaintance with one dignitary, a very jovial and fat Pasha, the proprietor of the inn, I believe, who was continually lounging about the Ezbekieh garden, and who, but for a slight Jewish cast of countenance, might have passed any day for a Frenchman. The ladies whom we saw were equally fair; that is, the very slight particles of the persons of ladies which our lucky eyes were permitted to gaze on. These lovely creatures go through the town by parties of three or four, mounted on donkeys, and attended by slaves holding on at the crupper, to receive the lovely riders lest they should fall, and shouting out shrill cries of "Schmaalek," "Ameenek" (or however else these words may be pronounced), and flogging off the people right and left with the buffalo-thong. But the dear creatures are even more closely disguised than at Constantinople: their bodies are enveloped with a large black silk hood, like a cab-head; the fashion seemed to be to spread their arms out, and give this covering all the amplitude of which it was capable, as they leered and ogled you from under their black masks with their big rolling eyes.

Everybody has big rolling eyes here (unless, to be sure, they lose one of ophthalmia). The Arab women are some of the noblest figures I have ever seen. The habit of carrying jars on the head always gives the figure grace and motion; and the dress the women wear certainly displays it to full advantage. I have brought a complete one home with me, at the service of any lady for a masqued ball. It consists of a coarse blue dress of calico, open in front, and fastened with a horn button. Three yards of blue stuff for a veil; on the top of the veil a jar to be balanced on the head; and a little black strip of silk to fall over the nose, and leave the beautiful eyes full liberty to roll and roam. But such a costume, not aided by any stays or

any other article of dress whatever, can be worn only by a very good figure. I suspect it won't be borrowed for many balls next season.

The men, a tall, handsome, noble race, are treated like dogs. I shall never forget riding through the crowded bazaars, my interpreter, or laquais-de-place, ahead of me to clear the way —when he took his whip, and struck it over the shoulders of a man who could not or would not make way.

The man turned round—an old, venerable, handsome face, with awfully sad eyes, and a beard long and quite grey. He did not make the least complaint, but slunk out of the way, piteously shaking his shoulder. The sight of that indignity gave me a sickening feeling of disgust. I shouted out to the cursed lackey to hold his hand, and forbade him ever in my presence to strike old or young more; but everybody is doing it. The whip is in everybody's hands: the Pasha's running footman, as he goes bustling through the bazaar; the doctor's

attendant, as he soberly threads the crowd on his mare; the negro slave, who is riding by himself, the most insolent of all, strikes and slashes about without mercy, and you never hear a single complaint.

How to describe the beauty of the streets to you!—the fantastic splendour; the variety of the houses, and archways, and hanging roofs, and balconies, and porches; the delightful accidents of light and shade which chequer them: the noise, the bustle, the brilliancy of the crowd: the interminable vast bazaars with their barbaric splendour. There is a fortune to be made for painters in Cairo, and materials for a whole Academy of them. I never saw such a variety of architecture, of life, of picturesqueness, of brilliant colour, and light and shade. There is a picture in every street, and at every bazaar stall. Some of these our celebrated water-colour painter, Mr. Lewis, has produced with admirable truth and exceeding minuteness and beauty; but there is room for a hundred to follow him; and should any artist (by some rare occurrence) read this, who has leisure, and wants to break new ground, let him take heart, and try a winter in Cairo, where there is the finest climate and the best subjects for his pencil.

A series of studies of negroes alone would form a picture-book, delightfully grotesque. Mounting my donkey to-day, I took a ride to the desolate noble old buildings outside the city, known as the Tombs of the Caliphs. Every one of these edifices, with their domes, and courts, and minarets, is strange and beautiful. In one of them there was an encampment of negro slaves newly arrived: some scores of them were huddled against the sunny wall; two or three of their masters lounged about the court, or lay smoking upon carpets. There was one of these fellows, a straight-nosed ebony-faced Abyssinian, with an expression of such sinister good-humour in his handsome face as would form a perfect type of villainy. He sat leering at me, over his carpet, as I endeavoured to get a sketch of that incarnate rascality. "Give me some money," said the fellow. "I know what you are about. You will sell my picture for money when you get back to Europe; let me have some of it now!" But the very rude and humble designer was quite unable to depict such a consummation and perfection of roguery; so flung him a cigar, which he began to smoke, grinning at the giver. I requested the interpreter to inform him, by way of assurance of my disinterest-

edness, that his face was a great deal too ugly to be popular in Europe, and that was the particular reason why I had selected it.

Then one of his companions got up and showed us his black cattle. The male slaves were chiefly lads, and the women young, well formed, and abominably hideous. The dealer pulled her blanket off one of them, and bade her stand up, which she did with a great deal of shuddering modesty. She was coal-black, her lips were the size of sausages, her eyes large and good-humoured; the hair or wool on this young person's head was curled and greased into a thousand filthy little ringlets. She was evidently the beauty of the flock.

They are not unhappy: they look to being bought, as many a spinster looks to an establishment in England; once in a family they are kindly treated and well clothed, and fatten, and are the merriest people of the whole community. These were of a much more savage sort than the slaves I had seen in the horrible market at Constantinople, where I recollect the following young creature—

(indeed it is a very fair likeness of her) whilst I was looking at her and forming pathetic conjectures regarding her fate—

smiling very good-humouredly, and bidding the interpreter ask me to buy her for twenty pounds.

From these Tombs of the Caliphs the Desert is before you. It comes up to the walls of the city, and stops at some gardens which spring up all of a sudden at its edge. You can see the first Station-house on the Suez Road; and so from distance-point to point, could ride thither alone without a guide.

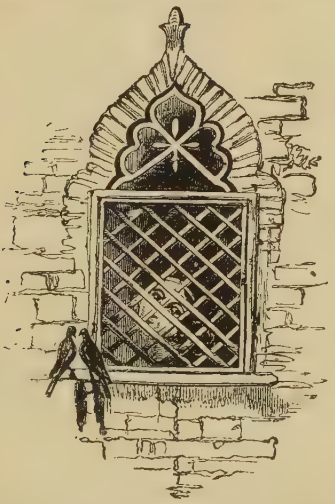
Asinus trotted gallantly into this desert for the space of a quarter of an hour. There we were (taking care to keep our back to the city walls), in the real actual desert: mounds upon mounds of sand, stretching away as far as the eye can see, until the dreary prospect fades away in the yellow horizon! I had formed a finer idea of it out of "Eothen." Perhaps in a simoom it may look more awful. The only adventure that befell in this romantic place was that Asinus's legs went deep into a hole: whereupon his rider went over his head, and bit the sand, and measured his length there; and upon this hint rose up, and rode home again. No doubt one should have gone out for a couple of days' march—as it was, the desert did not seem to me sublime, only *uncomfortable*.

Very soon after this perilous adventure the sun likewise dipped into the sand (but not to rise therefrom so quickly as I had done); and I saw this daily phenomenon of sunset with pleasure, for I was engaged at that hour to dine with our old friend J——, who has established himself here in the most complete Oriental fashion.

You remember J——, and what a dandy he was, the faultlessness of his boots and cravats, the brilliancy of his waistcoats and kid-gloves; we have seen his splendour in Regent Street, in the Tuileries, or on the Toledo. My first object on arriving here was to find out his house, which he has taken far away from the haunts of European civilisation, in the Arab quarter. It is situated in a cool, shady, narrow alley; so narrow, that it was with great difficulty—His Highness Ibrahim Pasha happening to pass at the same moment—that my little procession of two donkeys, mounted by self and valet-de-place, with the two donkey-boys our attendants, could range ourselves along the wall, and leave room for the august cavalcade. His Highness having rushed on (with an affable and good-humoured salute to our imposing party), we made J.'s quarters; and, in the first place, entered a broad covered court or porch, where

a swarthy tawny attendant, dressed in blue, with white turban, keeps a perpetual watch. Servants in the East lie about all the doors, it appears; and you clap your hands, as they do in the dear old "Arabian Nights," to summon them.

This servant disappeared through a narrow wicket, which he closed after him; and went into the inner chambers, to ask if his lord would receive us. He came back presently, and rising up from my donkey, I confided him to his attendant



(lads more sharp, arch, and wicked than these donkey-boys don't walk the pavé of Paris or London), and passed the mysterious outer door.

First we came into a broad open court, with a covered gallery running along one side of it. A camel was reclining on the grass there; near him was a gazelle, to glad J—— with his dark blue eye; and a numerous brood of hens and chickens, who furnish his liberal table. On the opposite side of the covered gallery rose up the walls of his long, queer, many-

windowed, many-galleried house. There were wooden lattices to those arched windows, through the diamonds of one of which I saw two of the most beautiful, enormous, ogling black eyes in the world, looking down upon the interesting stranger. Pigeons were flapping, and hopping, and fluttering, and cooing about. Happy pigeons, you are, no doubt, fed with crumbs from the henné-tipped fingers of Zuleika! All this court, cheerful in the sunshine, cheerful with the astonishing brilliancy of the eyes peering out from the lattice-bars, was as mouldy, ancient, and ruinous—as any gentleman's house in Ireland, let us say. The paint was peeling off the rickety old carved galleries; the arabesques over the windows were chipped and worn;—the ancientness of the place rendered it doubly picturesque. I have detained you a long time in the outer court. Why the deuce was Zuleika there, with the beautiful black eyes?

Hence we passed into a large apartment, where there was a fountain; and another domestic made his appearance, taking me in charge, and relieving the tawny porter of the gate. This fellow was clad in blue too, with a red sash and a grey beard. He conducted me into a great hall, where there was a great, large Saracenic oriel window. He seated me on a divan; and stalking off, for a moment, returned with a long pipe and a brass chafing-dish: he blew the coal for the pipe, which he motioned me to smoke, and left me there with a respectful bow. This delay, this mystery of servants, that outer court with the camels, gazelles, and other beautiful-eyed things, affected me prodigiously all the time he was staying away; and while I was examining the strange apartment and its contents, my respect and awe for the owner increased vastly.

As you will be glad to know how an Oriental nobleman (such as J—— undoubtedly is) is lodged and garnished, let me describe the contents of this hall of audience. It is about forty feet long, and eighteen or twenty high. All the ceiling is carved, gilt, painted and embroidered with arabesques, and choice sentences of Eastern writing. Some Mameluke Aga, or Bey, whom Mehemet Ali invited to breakfast and massacred, was the proprietor of this mansion once: it has grown dingier, but, perhaps, handsomer, since his time. Opposite the divan is a great bay-window, with a divan likewise round the niche. It looks out upon a garden about the size of Fountain Court,

Temple; surrounded by the tall houses of the quarter. The garden is full of green. A great palm-tree springs up in the midst, with plentiful shrubberies, and a talking fountain. The room beside the divan is furnished with one deal table, value five shillings; four wooden chairs, value six shillings; and a couple of mats and carpets. The table and chairs are luxuries imported from Europe. The regular Oriental dinner is put upon copper trays, which are laid upon low

stools. Hence J—— Effendi's house may be said to be much more sumptuously furnished than those of the Beys and Agas his neighbours.

When these things had been examined at leisure, J—— appeared. Could it be the exquisite of the "Europa" and the "Trois Frères"? A man—in a long yellow gown, with a long beard somewhat tinged with grey, with his head shaved, and wearing on it, first, a white wadded cotton nightcap; second, a red tarboosh—made his appearance and welcomed me cor-

dially. It was some time, as the Americans say, before I could "realise" the *semillant* J—— of old times.

He shuffled off his outer slippers before he curled up on the divan beside me. He clapped his hands, and languidly called "Mustapha." Mustapha came with more lights, pipes, and coffee; and then we fell to talking about London, and I gave him the last news of the comrades in that dear city. As we talked, his Oriental coolness and languor gave way to British cordiality; he was the most amusing companion of the —— club once more.

He has adapted himself outwardly, however, to the Oriental life. When he goes abroad he rides a grey horse with red housings, and has two servants to walk beside him. He wears a very handsome grave costume of dark blue, consisting of an embroidered jacket and gaiters, and a pair of trousers, which would make a set of dresses for an English family. His beard curls nobly over his chest, his Damascus scimitar on his thigh. His red cap gives him a venerable and Bey-like appearance. There is no gewgaw or parade about him, as in some of your dandified young Agas. I should say that he is a Major-General of Engineers, or a grave officer of State. We and the Turkified European, who found us at dinner, sat smoking in solemn divan.

His dinners were excellent; they were cooked by a regular Egyptian female cook. We had delicate cucumbers stuffed with forced-meats; yellow smoking pilaffs, the pride of the Oriental cuisine; kid and fowls à l'Aboukir and à la Pyramide: a number of little savoury plates of legumes of the vegetable-marrow sort; kibobs with an excellent sauce of plums and piquant herbs. We ended the repast with ruby pomegranates, pulled to pieces, deliciously cool and pleasant. For the meats, we certainly ate them with the Infidel knife and fork; but for the fruit, we put our hands into the dish and flicked them into our mouths in what cannot but be the true Oriental manner. I asked for lamb and pistachio-nuts, and cream-tarts *au poivre;* but J.'s cook did not furnish us with either of those historic dishes. And for drink, we had water freshened in the porous little pots of grey clay, at whose spout every traveller in the East has sucked delighted. Also, it must be confessed, we drank certain sherbets, prepared by the two great rivals, Hadji Hodson and Bass Bey—the bitterest and

most delicious of draughts! O divine Hodson! a camel's load of thy beer came from Beyrout to Jerusalem while we were there. How shall I ever forget the joy inspired by one of those foaming cool flasks?

We don't know the luxury of thirst in English climes. Sedentary men in cities at least have seldom ascertained it; but when they travel, our countrymen guard against it well. The road between Cairo and Suez is *jonché* with soda-water corks. Tom Thumb and his brothers might track their way across the desert by those landmarks.

Cairo is magnificently picturesque: it is fine to have palm-trees in your gardens, and ride about on a camel; but, after all, I was anxious to know what were the particular excitements of Eastern life, which detained J——, who is a town-bred man, from his natural pleasures and occupations in London; where his family don't hear from him, where his room is still kept ready at home, and his name is on the list of his club; and where his neglected sisters tremble to think that their Frederick is going about with a great beard and a crooked sword, dressed up like an odious Turk. In a "lark" such a costume may be very well; but home, London, a razor, your sister to make tea, a pair of moderate Christian breeches in lieu of those enormous Turkish shulwars, are vastly more convenient in the long run. What was it that kept him away from these decent and accustomed delights?

It couldn't be the black eyes in the balcony—upon his honour she was only the black cook, who has done the pilaff, and stuffed the cucumbers. No, it was an indulgence of laziness such as Europeans, Englishmen, at least, don't know how to enjoy. Here he lives like a languid Lotus-eater—a dreamy, hazy, lazy, tobaccofied life. He was away from evening parties, he said: he needn't wear white kid gloves, or starched neckcloths, or read a newspaper. And even this life at Cairo was too civilised for him: Englishmen passed through; old acquaintances would call: the great pleasure of pleasures was life in the desert,—under the tents, with still *more* nothing to do than in Cairo; now smoking, now cantering on Arabs, and no crowd to jostle you; solemn contemplations of the stars at night, as the camels were picketed, and the fires and the pipes were lighted.

The night-scene in the city is very striking for its vastness

and loneliness. Everybody has gone to rest long before ten o'clock. There are no lights in the enormous buildings; only the stars blazing above, with their astonishing brilliancy, in the blue peaceful sky. Your guides carry a couple of little lanterns which redouble the darkness in the solitary echoing street. Mysterious people are curled up and sleeping in the porches. A patrol of soldiers passes, and hails you. There is a light yet in one mosque, where some devotees are at prayers all night; and you hear the queerest nasal music proceeding from those pious believers. As you pass the mad-house, there is one poor fellow still talking to the moon—no sleep for him. He howls and sings there all the night—quite cheerfully, however. He has not lost his vanity with his reason: he is a Prince in spite of the bars and the straw.

What to say about those famous edifices, which has not been better said elsewhere?—but you will not believe that we visited them, unless I bring some token from them.

A white-capped lad skips up the stones with a jug of water in his hand, to refresh weary climbers; and squats himself down on the summit. The vast flat landscape stretches behind him; the great winding river; the purple city, with forts, and domes, and spires; the green fields, and palm-groves, and speckled villages; the plains still covered with shining inundations—the landscape stretches far far away, until it is lost and mingled in the golden horizon. It is poor work this landscape-painting in print. Shelley's two sonnets are the best views that I know of the Pyramids—better than the reality; for a man may lay down the book, and in quiet fancy conjure up a picture out of these magnificent words, which shan't be disturbed by any pettinesses or mean realities,—such as the swarms of howling beggars, who jostle you about the actual place, and scream in your ears incessantly, and hang on your skirts, and bawl for money.

The ride to the Pyramids is one of the pleasantest possible. In the fall of the year, though the sky is almost cloudless above you, the sun is not too hot to bear; and the landscape, refreshed by the subsiding inundations, delightfully green and cheerful. We made up a party of some half-dozen from the hotel, a lady (the kind soda-water provider, for whose hospitality the most grateful compliments are hereby offered) being of the company, bent like the rest upon going to the summit of Cheops. Those

who were cautious and wise, took a brace of donkeys. At least five times during the route did my animals fall with me, causing me to repeat the desert experiment over again, but with more success. The space between a moderate pair of legs and the ground, is not many inches. By eschewing stirrups, the donkey could fall, and the rider alight on the ground, with the greatest ease and grace. Almost everybody was down and up again in the course of the day.

We passed through the Ezbekieh and by the suburbs of the town, where the garden-houses of the Egyptian noblesse are situated, to Old Cairo, where a ferry-boat took the whole party across the Nile, with that noise and bawling volubility in which the Arab people seem to be so unlike the grave and silent Turks; and so took our course for some eight or ten miles over the devious tract which the still outlying waters obliged us to pursue. The Pyramids were in sight the whole way. One or two thin silvery clouds were hovering over them, and casting delicate rosy shadows upon the grand simple old piles. Along the track we saw a score of pleasant pictures of Eastern life:—the Pasha's horses and slaves stood caparisoned at his door; at the gate of one country-house, I am sorry to say, the Bey's *gig* was in waiting,—a most unromantic chariot; the husbandmen were coming into the city, with their strings of donkeys and their loads; as they arrived, they stopped and sucked at the fountain: a column of red-capped troops passed to drill, with slouched gait, white uniforms, and glittering bayonets. Then we had the pictures at the quay: the ferry-boat, and the red-sailed river-boat, getting under way, and bound up the stream. There was the grain market, and the huts on the opposite side; and that beautiful woman, with silver armlets, and a face the colour of gold, which (the nose-bag having been luckily removed) beamed solemnly on us Europeans, like a great yellow harvest moon. The bunches of purpling dates were pending from the branches; grey cranes or herons were flying over the cool shining lakes, that the river's overflow had left behind; water was gurgling through the courses by the rude locks and barriers formed there, and overflowing this patch of ground; whilst the neighbouring field was fast budding into the more brilliant fresh green. Single dromedaries were stepping along, their riders lolling on their hunches; low sail-boats were lying in the canals; now, we crossed an old marble bridge; now, we went, one by one, over a ridge of slip-

pery earth; now, we floundered through a small lake of mud. At last, at about half-a-mile off the Pyramid, we came to a piece of water some two-score yards broad, where a regiment of half-naked Arabs, seizing upon each individual of the party, bore us off on their shoulders, to the laughter of all, and the great perplexity of several, who every moment expected to be pitched into one of the many holes with which the treacherous lake abounded.

It was nothing but joking and laughter, bullying of guides, shouting for interpreters, quarrelling about sixpences. We were acting a farce, with the Pyramids for the scene. There they rose up enormous under our eyes, and the most absurd trivial things were going on under their shadow. The sublime had disappeared, vast as they were. Do you remember how Gulliver lost his awe of the tremendous Brobdingnag ladies? Every traveller must go through all sorts of chaffering, and bargaining, and paltry experiences, at this spot. You look up the tremendous steps, with a score of savage ruffians bellowing round you; you hear faint cheers and cries high up, and catch sight of little reptiles crawling upwards; or, having achieved the summit, they come hopping and bouncing down again from degree to degree,—the cheers and cries swell louder and more disagreeable; presently the little jumping thing, no bigger than an insect a moment ago, bounces down upon you expanded into a panting Major of Bengal cavalry. He drives off the Arabs with an oath,—wipes his red shining face with his yellow handkerchief, drops puffing on the sand in a shady corner, where cold fowl and hard eggs are awaiting him, and the next minute you see his nose plunged in a foaming beaker of brandy and soda-water. He can say now, and for ever, he has been up the Pyramid. There is nothing sublime in it. You cast your eye once more up that staggering perspective of a zigzag line, which ends at the summit, and wish you were up there—and down again. Forwards!—Up with you! It must be done. Six Arabs are behind you, who won't let you escape if you would.

The importunity of these ruffians is a ludicrous annoyance to which a traveller must submit. For two miles before you reach the Pyramids they seize on you and never cease howling. Five or six of them pounce upon one victim, and never leave him until they have carried him up and down. Sometimes they

conspire to run a man up the huge stair, and bring him, half-killed and fainting, to the top. Always a couple of brutes insist upon impelling you sternwards; from whom the only means to release yourself is to kick out vigorously and unmercifully, when the Arabs will possibly retreat. The ascent is not the least romantic, or difficult, or sublime; you walk up a great broken staircase, of which some of the steps are four feet high. It's not hard, only a little high. You see no better view from the top than you behold from the bottom; only a little more river, and sand, and ricefield. You jump down the big steps at your leisure; but your meditations you must keep for after-times, —the cursed shrieking of the Arabs prevents all thought or leisure.

——And this is all you have to tell about the Pyramids? Oh! for shame! Not a compliment to their age and size? Not a big phrase,—not a rapture? Do you mean to say that you had no feeling of respect and awe? Try, man, and build up a monument of words as lofty as they are—they, whom "imber edax" and "aquilo impotens" and the flight of ages have not been able to destroy.

——No: be that work for great geniuses, great painters, great poets! This quill was never made to take such flights; it comes of the wing of a humble domestic bird, who walks a common; who talks a great deal (and hisses sometimes); who can't fly far or high, and drops always very quickly; and whose unromantic end is to be laid on a Michaelmas or Christmas table, and there to be discussed for half-an-hour—let us hope, with some relish.

Another week saw us in the Quarantine Harbour at Malta, where seventeen days of prison and quiet were almost agreeable, after the incessant sight-seeing of the last two months. In the interval, between the 23rd of August and the 27th of October, we may boast of having seen more men and cities than most travellers have seen in such a time:—Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Malta, Athens, Smyrna, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo. I shall have the carpet-bag, which has visited these places in company with its owner, embroidered with their names:

as military flags are emblazoned, and laid up in ordinary, to be looked at in old age. With what a number of sights and pictures,—of novel sensations, and lasting and delightful remembrances, does a man furnish his mind after such a tour! You forget all the annoyances of travel; but the pleasure remains with you, through that kind provision of Nature by which a man forgets being ill, but thinks with joy of getting well, and can remember all the minute circumstances of his convalescence. I forget what sea-sickness is now: though it occupies a woeful portion of my Journal. There was a time on board when the bitter ale was decidedly muddy; and the cook of the ship deserting at Constantinople, it must be confessed his successor was for some time before he got his hand in. These sorrows have passed away with the soothing influence of time: the pleasures of the voyage remain, let us hope, as long as life will endure. It was but for a couple of days that those shining columns of the Parthenon glowed under the blue sky there; but the experience of a life could scarcely impress them more vividly. We saw Cadiz only for an hour; but the white buildings, and the glorious blue sea, how clear they are to the memory!—with the tang of that gipsy's guitar dancing in the market-place, in the midst of the fruit, and the beggars, and the sunshine. Who can forget the Bosphorus, the brightest and fairest scene in all the world; or the towering lines of Gibraltar; or the great piles of Mafra, as we rode into the Tagus? As I write this, and think, back comes Rhodes, with its old towers and artillery, and that wonderful atmosphere, and that astonishing blue sea which environs the island. The Arab riders go pacing over the plains of Sharon, in the rosy twilight, just before sunrise; and I can see the ghastly Moab mountains, with the Dead Sea gleaming before them, from the mosque on the way towards Bethany. The black gnarled trees of Gethsemane lie at the foot of Olivet, and the yellow ramparts of the city rise up on the stony hills beyond.

But the happiest and best of all the recollections, perhaps, are those of the hours passed at night on the deck, when the stars were shining overhead, and the hours were tolled at their time, and your thoughts were fixed upon home far away. As the sun rose I once heard the priest, from the minaret of Constantinople, crying out, "Come to prayer," with his shrill voice ringing through the clear air; and saw, at the same hour, the

Arab prostrate himself and pray, and the Jew Rabbi, bending over his book, and worshipping the Maker of Turk and Jew. Sitting at home in London, and writing this last line of farewell, those figures come back the clearest of all to the memory, with the picture, too, of our ship sailing over the peaceful Sabbath sea, and our own prayers and services celebrated there. So each, in his fashion, and after his kind, is bowing down, and adoring the Father, who is equally above all. Cavil not, you brother or sister, if your neighbour's voice is not like yours; only hope that his words are honest (as far as they may be), and his heart humble and thankful.

THE END.

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